

# The History of Episcopacy:

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PRELATIC AND MODERATE.

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WITH AN INTRODUCTION BY THE

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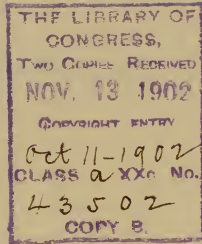
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To the African Methodist Episcopal Ministry,  
this work  
is most affectionately dedicated.

## PREFACE.

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In the winter of 1894, while visiting the South Carolina Conference at Charleston, I had the pleasure of listening to an address from the Rector of the Colored Episcopal Church. It was this address which gave the inspiration for the ensuing pages.

The Rector, after dwelling pleasingly upon the educational and missionary enterprises of the "African Methodist Societies" (as he called them), and what they had done for the uplift of the race in general, closed by expressing the hope that some day our "Societies," which had wrought so mightily in the past, would become a *Church* with a *full-fledged ministry*. Intentionally or unintentionally, the speaker had struck a blow at the validity of the African Methodist Episcopal ministry, and our soul was on fire to answer. Restrained by the Bishop's gavel, we yielded to the courtesy of the hour, but the episode created in me a resolve to probe to the very bottom, the doctrine of *Apostolic Succession*. In trying to do this, very many resources of information have been drawn upon, and a large number of authorities consulted.

After investigating the subject to my own satisfaction, I felt it my duty to put the results of my investigation into book-form, so that our younger minis-



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ters and people might have ready at their command, a concise, consecutive and complete statement and discussion of the doctrine of "Apostolic Succession," and thereby be always ready to give a reasonable answer for the hope they have as members of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. I may be permitted to say that the work has been done during such fragments of time as could be spared from the ministerial duties incident to large pastorates, and this will, I trust, account for any unevenness of style which may appear. I have not written in any polemic spirit, nor have I written with any ambition for authorship. The work has been the outgrowth of the feeling that there is the need of just such a work for our ministry.

JAMES A. DAVIS.

Nashville, Tenn., October 22, 1902.

## INTRODUCTION.

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It is Paul who says: "Behold I show you a mystery," which the Revised Version puts: "Behold I tell you a mystery" (I Cor. 15:51). We too have a mystery, either to show or to tell. Not such however as was that of Paul, which Archdeacon Farrar paraphrases, "Behold, I make known to you a truth now made known to me by Revelation." Our mystery came to us not as Paul's, by *revelation*; on the contrary, simply by that, that is, its twin sister, *observation*; and yet it is none the less a mystery, which according to the *Century*, is: "Something that is inexplicable." Paul's mystery is certainly inexplicable; ours, if not inexplicable, will cause a whole roundelay of philosophizing to explain it. We can best present it in an interrogation: Why does Methodism, especially the American branch of it, produce a race of bookmakers? The general estimate of the Methodists, is, that in scholarship, they are far behind their brothers of kindred Protestant faiths—far behind Episcopalians and Presbyterians, Lutherans and Baptists; and yet on the score of bookmaking, they are quite the equals of the most advanced of these, if not a little ahead. We remember reading years ago, a review on McClintock & Strong's Cyclopedea, by an Episcopalian editor, the trend of which was of the na-

ture of a lament, that it was left for Methodists to produce such a work: and it, not only, but other works of similar scholarship. We cannot call to mind the source of this review, for we read it in the days of our editorship; but we are most sure of its correctness.

And this is our mystery: Why should a sect scarcely more than a century old and supposedly the most unlearned, have overrun the world not only with its faith, but with its books?

We leave for others to give the roundelay of philosophy alluded to, while we concern ourselves about the fact, as it relates especially to the Methodism, that is denominationally known as "African." African Methodism has produced and is producing more books, "good bad and indifferent" than all the other branches of "African" Christianity in America put together. This we say simply as a matter of fact, and in no sense as a matter of boasting. The why and how, we leave for others to discover.

Among these Methodists in all truth, it may be said: "Of making many books there is no end." As it relates to our own Church, from the days of Noah Cannon's "Rock of Wisdom," and A. R. Green's "Life of Dandridge F. Davis," and the "Brief Sketch of the Life of Rev. David Canyon," by the same writer, to the present, the ministers of our Church may be said to have stepped upon one another's heels in the great race of authorship: History, Biography, Theology, Church Economy: Sermonizing, Poetry, these and other kindred subjects, have occupied their attention; not as masters, to be sure, but as those who



sat at the feet of great subjects and looking up into their faces drew such inspiration from them, as made silence impossible. At the venture of criticism they dared to put their thoughts upon paper, and send them out into the world.

The very latest of these is the volume for which these words, are to serve as an introduction: "The History of Episcopacy: Prelatic and Moderate." We have not been privileged to read the work. "I send you," says the writer, "the Preface and Contents, hoping that from these you can get a bird's eye view of my work, so as to enable you to write it."

Any introduction written under such circumstances must of course be largely general: for upon such a subject as Episcopacy in the Christian Church, especially any particular phase of it, a bird's eye view scarcely suffices; certainly not if the merits of it are to be touched. And yet we know the writer to be a man of sound judgment and ready research. Giving such qualities as these, there is not much danger that any reasonable subject will suffer at his hands. In the presence of the younger generation of college bred, Dr. Davis may say with Themistocles, as recorded by Plutarch: "'Tis true I never learned how to tune a harp or play upon a lute, but I know how to raise a small and inconsiderable city, to glory and greatness." And yet we may say, that in the harp tuning and lute playing of this work, there is doubtless such magic, as will cause to blush the men whom the schools have finished and not they themselves.

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Dr. Davis has chosen a most intricate subject; how well he has handled it, the work itself will show. Most heartily do we commend it.

BENJ. TUCKER TANNER.



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# The History of Episcopacy:

PRELATIC AND MODERATE.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE ORGANIZATION OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

The Church as an organized compact of Christian believers, occupies but a very small place in the teachings of Christ. But two instances are recorded in the Gospel, so far as we are able to observe, in which he referred to his followers in a churchly capacity, viz.: Matt. 16:17-19; Matt. 18:17.

To the casual reader, it may appear incredibly strange that the Church which was to play such an important role in the coming kingdom, should receive so little attention at the hands of our Lord; but when it is remembered that he came not for the purpose of establishing the Church, but "the Kingdom of Heaven," which was greater than the Church, the whole is explicable.

Two things are clear in studying the New Testament, viz.: that the kingdom is the doctrine of the Gospels, while the Church is the doctrine of the Epistles. The former was the outgrowth of the work and teachings of Christ, while the latter was the outgrowth of the work and teachings of the apostles.

Of the organization of the Church as a visible expression of that kingdom, which is not of this world, our Lord had but little to do. During His earthly ministry he was occupied with the more weighty matter of setting forth in parables and beatitudes, the fundamental principles of the kingdom of heaven, and holding before men that condition of universal righteousness, which he desired all men to attain.

*"The kingdom of heaven"* was the theme of His ministry. With the apostles however, the idea of the Church is more prominent, and for the good reason that the most serious question for them was, how the sublime purpose of our Lord could best be accomplished. The kingdom of heaven as set forth by our Lord related to a purpose to be accomplished, and the Church, the organ-

ized body of the believers unto a spiritual compact, seemed to the apostles the most fitting means for the accomplishment of this end.

The idea of the kingdom was divine, but the idea of the Church, so far as its physical organism is concerned, is human. Hence it is that so little is said by our Lord in his teachings concerning the Church, which was to be the agency of righteousness, and the visible expression of the coming kingdom.

It is apparent however from the scriptural references of which we have already made mention, as well as those made in the Epistles, that it was the will and purpose of the Divine Founder of our Christian religion, that his followers should be allied together in a co-operative capacity, having mutual sympathies and moral obligations toward one another as well as toward himself.

But until the Day of Pentecost it will be observed (and for the reason above stated), there was no formal organization of the Church attempted either upon the part of Christ or the apostles. This introductory period—from the beginning of Christ's ministry until the Day of Pentecost—was



taken up in the annunciation of certain great moral principles concerning the kingdom of heaven, and the indoctrination and sanctification of his apostles for the special work of inaugurating and carrying forward the interest of his kingdom, for which they were to be specially endowed.

In the beginning, as well as throughout the history of the Christian Church both the divine and human elements were to be co-operative. While Christ was to be the Spirit, Life and Organic Head of the Church, the apostles were intrusted with its federal interest. In a word, it was to be a Spiritual Autonomy.

The apostles were to be the governmental representatives of Christ in his Church and they were no ordinary men. They were a set of men divinely called, ordained and set apart by a special act of heaven (Acts 2: 1-4) and were commissioned with plenipotentiary powers. They were to be more than missionaries. They were ambassadors with delegated authority to stand in Christ's stead; institute, ordain and legislate. In a word they were to be Christ's vicegerents.

To this divine, Melchisedec ministry, (without any predecessors, or successors

saving as to faith and doctrine), Christ gave some special instructions in regard to their apostolate, which makes their institutional mission self-evident. To Peter, representatively, He said, "I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 16: 19.) To the apostles collectively, He said: "Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:18.) From these divine injunctions, it is clear that the apostles were divinely chosen and appointed to be the originators and legislators of the Church of Christ on earth. To them it was given, to shape its polity and announce its doctrine and to give whatever regulations and instructions they deemed best for its future growth and development.

The commission was couched in the following language: "Go ye therefore, and teach" or rather as the new version would have it—"make disciples of all nations, bap-

tizing them in the name of the Father, and, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have told you: and, lo, I am with you always even unto the end of the world." (Matt. 28: 19-20.) This divine commission authorized them to proceed at once on their institutional mission, but not until they had received the special power of which we have spoken, "But tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high." (Luke 24: 49.) The act of their faith and obedience having been accomplished, "The Holy Ghost," the power promised from on high was received, and straightway the apostles began to organize the newly baptized believers into a Christian compact, called the Church. The record (Acts 2: 37-47) of this historic event informs us that when they heard Peter, "they were pricked in their hearts, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, men and brethren what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost \* \* \* \* \*

And the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And that they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread, and in prayers. And all that believed were together and had all things common. And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved."

Such are the historic facts and incidents connected with the organic formation of the Christian Church. It will be seen therefore, that in the institution of the Christian Church, Christ gave no formal directions as to its government or any ecclesiastical polity to be observed. His ministers were to be divinely called. This right he reserved to himself; but the matter of ecclesiastical arrangement as to orders and office, and the general government of his Church, he left to his followers as time, growth and conditions might suggest. Hence the polity of the Christian Church being human, it has always been influenced by, and modeled after the civil laws and government of the country, in which it finds an existence.

It is also apparent that at first there was no Apostolic Constitution so-called, no fixed

code of ecclesiastical laws for the government of the infant Church. But on the other hand, a few general rules and principles, simple and yet sufficient for the Church as a rule of faith and practice in its embryonic existence.

Says Bishop Hurst: "The organization of the Church was the direct result of the remarkable scenes at Pentecost \* \* \* \* Only a general organization however, was effected, the most simple arrangements were made for government, as the believers were as yet but few, and confined to a narrow area. The more elaborate polity was left for the future needs of the Church to take its shape according to the expansion of the societies and their individual requirement." (Short history of the Early Church, p. 3.) But it was not long until under the afflatus of the Holy Spirit, which had taken possession of the apostles and the great missionary spirit which led them everywhere preaching Jesus and Him crucified, until there were two live and powerful church communities at work, the eastern and the western. Both were one and the same, as to faith and doctrine, but marked and distinct



as to individuality, and with a slight difference as to polity. And this peculiar unlikeness as to individuality, and this shade of difference as to polity, are accounted for in the difference of the language of the people and the civil government in which each had an existence.



## CHAPTER II.

### THE MODEL OF THE APOSTOLIC CHURCH.

IN THE EAST  
THE SYNAGOGUE. In studying the polity of the Eastern Church, we find that the synagogue with its officary and order of worship was closely observed by the apostles. The government and regulations which they made for the Palestinian Churches, all correspond in a remarkable and unmistakable manner with the whole system of the Jewish Synagogue.

Says the Rev. Dr. Jacobs, a high authority on the Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament Government: "As the Christian religion rose up out of the very depths and essence of Judaism, following it as its foreordained end and consumation, it might reasonably be expected that such forms and regulations of the Jewish Church as were not inconsistent with the principles of the Gospel Dispensation, would be retained and adapted to its use. And the apostles being

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men deeply imbued with Jewish feelings, and (it may be said) with Jewish prejudices must have been inclined to deviate no further from the customary observances of their law than their divine instructor taught them to be absolutely required. And they must have felt that it was wise to give their new religious life and worship as little innovation and strangeness to Jewish minds as possible." (The Ecclesiastical Polity of the New Testament, p. 94.) Bishop Lightfoot in his learned "Excursus" on the Christian Ministry, appended to the Epistle to the Philippians, p. 190, says: "Christian congregations in Palestine long continued to be designated by this name Synagogue;" and Archbishop Whately in "Kingdom of Christ Delineated," p. 108, remarks: "Whenever a Jewish Synagogue existed which was brought, the whole or the chief part of it, to embrace the Gospel, the apostles did not there so much as form a Christian Church, or congregation, *ekklesia*, as *make an existing congregation Christian* by introducing the Christian sacraments and worship, and establishing whatever regulations were requisite for the newly adopted faith, leav-

ing the machinery (if I may so speak) of government unchanged."

To multiply references is unnecessary. It is obvious that by reason of the almost perfect agreement of the worship of the early Christian Church with that of the synagogue as to simplicity and official arrangements, the apostles naturally, if not necessarily, adopted the synagogue as its model; and this leads us in our search for the first official designation in the Christian Ministry, "Elder" or "Presbyter."

In connection with every synagogue with its simple system of worship, there always existed the Synedrion, or local court, the seat of the Elders. These religious teachers, simple in their attire and unconsecrated by any special rights and unrestricted by any rule of succession, were known as "The Rulers of the Synagogue" (Luke 8:49), more commonly called "Elders," a title which the Jews likely borrowed from the Egyptians. Its first mention being made in connection with the funeral pageant that went up from Egypt to bury Joseph. (Gen. 50:7.) "The office of the Elder," says Dr. Smith's Dictionary of the Bible, "with the Jews as

well as the Egyptians, and wherever a patriarchal system of government was in vogue, was purely political; but it gradually grew into religious prominence with the Jews, until at the beginning of the Christian era, they, the elders, were a separate and distinct body from the Sanhedrin, whose duties were more religious than political." They had the control and the disposition of all moral issues and were the religious directors of the people, one of whom, the most aged and honored was styled *the Presbyter* or "ruler of the Synagogue." This ruling Elder was regarded as the chief pastor of the Synagogue. (Acts 18:8-17.) The Churches in the East therefore, having the Synagogue as their model, very naturally applied this title to their chief pastors. They were called Elders or Presbyters.

Bishop Lightfoot in his Commentary on Philippians (Eighth Edition, London 1885, p. 95) in speaking of the early history of the words *Presbyterus*, *Elders*, *Presbyter*, or *Priest*, says: "Illustrations indeed might be found in almost all nations, ancient or modern, in the Gerousia of Sparta, for instance, in the Senatus of Rome in the Signo-



ria of Florence, or in the Aldermen of our own country and time, where the deliberate body originally took its name from the advanced age of its members. Among the chosen people, we are met at every turn with presbyters or elders, in Church and State, from the earliest to the latest times. In the lifetime of the law-giver, in the days of the Judges, throughout the monarchy, during the captivity, after the return and under the Roman domination, the 'elders' appear as an integral part of the governing body of the country." But it is rather in a special religious development of the office, than in these national and civic Presbyteries that we are to look for the prototype of the Christian Ministry. Over every Jewish Synagogue, whether at home or abroad, a council of Elders presided. It was not unnatural therefore, that when the Christian Synagogue took its place by the side of the Jewish, a similar organization should be adopted with such modifications as circumstances required; and thus the name familiar under the Jewish dispensation was retained under the new.

While the Palestinian Church  
**IN THE WEST** took its model after the Syna-  
**THE BASILICA.** gogue, the Church in the West,  
on the other hand, the majority of whose  
converts were pagans, in giving organic  
shape and ecclesiastical direction to its  
societies, naturally fashioned them after  
its idea of government which was more dem-  
ocratic than theocratic; and which was found  
in the Basilica, a hall or court-room, which  
originated with the Athenians, and was  
used by the king and his counselors for the  
making and the administration of laws. In  
addition to its original use in the days of  
Roman supremacy, it was used as a market  
place (Acts 17:17), a place of exchange, and  
a place for public assemblies, where the peo-  
ple met to deliberate on matters pertaining  
to the public good, and also for diversions.  
These public places were generally open to  
all the citizens of the Roman province.  
Hence when Paul and Barnabas entered upon  
their missionary tour in the West, they  
found these public places of great service to  
them. Their frequency, admissibility and  
adaptability rendered them the most suita-  
ble places for the delivery of those public

discourses, which from the beginning were employed by the apostles as a means of Christian edification. Now it must be remembered that the word Church is political and of Greek derivation, coming from the Greek form *ekklesia*, which was first used by the Hellenists to signify, *the calling out*, the gathering together or the assembling of the people for deliberation on matters pertaining to the general good of society, the city or State.

The individual who called out and presided over the *ekklesia* (church) was known as the Archon, most generally known as the Episcopus. Hence in designating the chief pastor, who had the superintendency over the church community, the western societies used the word which to them conveyed the idea of oversight or superintendency, which was Episcopus, and from this derivation we have our Anglican word, *Bishop*. Bishop Lightfoot (ib., p. 95) says that: "Episcopus," "bishop," "overseer," were official titles among the Greeks. In the language of the Athenians, it was used especially to designate a new colony or acquisition, so that the Attic bishop corresponds to the

Spartan harmost. The title however, is not confined to Attic usage, it is a designation; for instance, of the inspectors, whose business it was to report to the Indian kings, of the commissioners appointed by Mithridates to settle affairs in Ephesus, of magistrates who regulate the sale of provisions under the Romans, and of certain officers in Rhodes, whose functions are unknown."

Episcopus, therefore with the Hellenists with whom the word originated, meant an "Inspector" or "Overseer;" a political personage, an individual who had the control of governmental affairs. Hence the word originally meant a political superintendent or overseer. It was born of the Greek mind to convey this idea, and was not only used by the Greeks, but by the Romans and the entire western world, to designate individuals who had the control in matters of State. It is clear therefore, that in the Apostolic times (Presbyterus) and (Episcopus) were merely conventional terms used by the eastern and western Churches to designate one and the same person. The eastern Churches used *Presbuteroi* while the western Churches used *Episcopoi*.

And here it is worthy of note that wherever the word *Episcopoi* appears in the New Testament, with but one exception, it is used by Paul, the western apostle of Christianity to the western pastors or western Churches. The word (*Presbuteros*) was used by the western Churches interchangeably with the word (*Episcopus*). But the eastern Churches never used the word *Episcopus* interchangeably with the word (*Presbuteros*). *Episcopus* was a word peculiarly western. Bishop Lightfoot in discussing the history of the two words *Presbyters* and *Bishops* says: "To the office of the Gentile Church alone, is the term applied as a synonym of presbyter. At Philippi in Asia Minor, in Crete, the presbyter is so-called. In the next generation the title is employed in a letter written by the Greek Church of Rome to the Greek Church of Corinth. Thus the word would seem to be especially Hellenic. Beyond this we are left to conjecture; but, if we may assume that the directors of religious and social clubs among the heathen were commonly so-called, it would naturally occur, if not to the Gentile Christians themselves, at all events, to their heathen asso-

ciates, as a fit designation for the presiding member of the new society. The infant Church of Christ which appeared to the Jews as a synagogue would be regarded by the heathen as a confraternity. But whatever may have been the origin of the term, it did not displace the earlier name presbyter, which still held its place as a synonym, even in Gentile congregations." Hence we see that the use of the two names, Presbyter and Bishop, in Apostolic times was but conventional. They were simply synonyms. In the duties incumbent upon both the Elder and Bishop in the beginning there was not the slightest difference, their honors and duties being the same—"To feed the flock of God, taking the oversight thereof." (I Peter 5:2.)





## CHAPTER III.

PROOFS, AS SHOWN FROM THE SCRIPTURES,  
THAT ELDERS AND BISHOPS WERE OF  
THE SAME ORDER AND OFFICE.

The New Testament is the bulwark of our faith, and the tower of our strength, and its declaration as to the qualifications, orders, duties and powers of the apostolic ministry must be our authority. All else is human, and can be accepted only as certain ecclesiastical arrangement, which seemed best to the early Church Fathers and High Churchmen of later times, for the furtherance of the Gospel, the edification of the Church and the glory of God. Let us then proceed to the law and to the testimony, therefore, for by its evidence our argument must either stand or fall.

The conventional use of the  
**PROOF FIRST.** names, Bishop and Presbyter  
in the New Testament, is proof  
that they were one and the same person.

The first thing that strikes one on investigating this subject, is that these names are invariably used in common. Bishops are spoken of as Presbyters, and Presbyters are spoken of as Bishops.

In Paul's Epistle to Titus (Chap. 1:5-7), we read, "For this cause left I thee in Crete, that thou shouldest set in order the things that are wanting, and ordain *elders* in every city, as I had appointed thee: If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. For a *bishop* must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre." In this passage of Scripture, both Elders (Presbyters) and Bishops are mentioned in common. The passage deals with the proper subjects of ordination and the subjects mentioned that are worthy of holy hands, are indifferently spoken of as Elders (Presbyters) or Bishops. Here, it is clear that they are spoken of as one and the same person in office. In Acts 20:17-28, we read, "And from Miletus, he (Paul) sent to Ephesus, and called the elders (presbyters) of the Church." After delivering unto them

that eloquent address, in which he reminded them of his faithfulness to God and the Church, he charged them in the twenty-eighth verse, saying, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you *overseers*, (episkopoi or bishops) to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

In this passage as in the above, Elders (Presbyters) and Bishops are spoken of in common. In the call, they are mentioned as Elders (Presbyters) and in the charge they are addressed as Bishops (Episkopoi). The identity is clear to the most casual reader.

St. Peter, who was distinctively the eastern apostle of Christianity, as St. Paul was of the West, in his first Epistle 5:1-3, uses language quite as bold and convincing as that of Paul on this point. "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as

being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." It is clear that in the text "elder" and Bishop are one and the same as to order and office, the word Elder implying order; while the word Bishop implies office. Both are inherent in the one and same individual. The word Bishop occurs for the last time in the New Testament in I Peter 2:25, "For ye were as sheep going astray; but are now returned unto the Shepherd and Bishop of your souls." It is obvious that the word Bishop in this text has reference to Christ. And be it understood, that he is not spoken of as the "Chief Shepherd and Bishop of pastor, but of the souls of the sheep, which had gone astray. Thus in the last instance, where the word Bishop occurs in the New Testament as well as in the above-mentioned instances, we find that the word Bishop is used in common with the word "elder" and "Shepherd." And now what can this family of names mean if not a commonality.

The conclusion to which the language of the Scripture leads us is, that these names were used conventionally or in common; and it is the logic of language that where names

are used conventionally the things are one and the same. Says the Rev. Mr. Powell (in *Apostolic Succession*, p. 89), "The community of names in the New Testament between bishops and presbyters implies a community of attributes, a substantial identity of nature: and that bishops and presbyters are not only nominally but really and indeed one and the same office."

Bishops and Presbyters  
were one and the same, in  
office, in that they had the  
same ordination, powers and  
duties. Read again Acts 20:17-28, and Titus 1:5-7. Nowhere in the New Testament is there spoken of or even hinted at, a special ordination of Bishops as a separate and superior order of ministers. By Divine Right, Bishops have nothing superior to Presbyters in ordination. Both are equal as to powers of ordination and of church government. In fact, the ordination act is inherent solely in the Presbytery. "Neglect not the gift that is in thee, which was given thee by prophecy, with the laying on of the hands of the presbytery." (I Timothy 4:14). This is the only instance in the Scripture, where there

**PROOF SECOND.**

is a direct mention of the act of ordination.

If the old adage be true, that "A stream can rise no higher than its source," the argument is clear that there can be no Scriptural ordination higher than that of the Presbytery. For in the Scriptures, only Presbyters are ordainers. But believing as we do that Presbyters and Bishops were one and the same, and that each is implied in the name of the other; is it not understood that the word Bishop is implied in the word Presbyter of the text; thus making both equal as to orders and in the power of conferring the ordination gift? In ordination, powers and duties, they are *one and the same*.

Bishop and Presbyter are  
one and the same in that each

**PROOF THIRD.** had the oversight of Churches  
and not of ministers. In ev-

idence of this statement let us re-examine a few of the passages of Scripture already cited (I Peter 5:1): "The elders which are among you I exhort, who am also an elder, and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that shall be revealed: Feed the flock of God which is among you, taking the oversight



thereof, not by constraint, but willingly; not for filthy lucre, but of a ready mind; neither as being lords over God's heritage, but being ensamples to the flock." In this Scripture, no illusion is made to the pastoral care of ministers, but of the flock of God. The *Episkopountes*, acting like Bishops of the text do not mean, as Romanists and High Churchmen, would say, that these Elders here addressed had been or were to be set apart as an order, separate and distinct from that of the Eldership. But that they were to act toward their flocks in their official capacity, as the *Episkopoi* of Greece did toward the assemblies, cities, or provinces, over which they had been placed. As they took the oversight, direction and government of their sufferage, so they (the Elders) were to "take the episcopal supervision of the flock of God not by constraint, not for filthy lucre, neither as being lords over God's heritage" as the heathen, but by "being examples to the flock." In a word, leaving out mercenariness and force rule, characteristic of human power, they were to be as watchful and faithful in every particular as were the governors of Caesar. In this Scripture, there-

fore, the pastoral care of the flock is the only lesson taught. In Acts 20:28, Paul charged the Elders of Ephesus saying, "Take heed, therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God." Here the same double reference is made to these chief pastors. They are called Elders and *Episcopoi*, Presbyters, Bishops, and the duty enjoined on them is the same, to take heed to the flock over which the Holy Ghost had appointed them and to feed the same. Each had the pastoral care of a flock, "the flock over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers." Their administration and government were limited to the flocks and not to Shepherds.

In I Timothy 3:1-5, Paul speaks of a Bishop's care of the Church of God, after the manner of a man "ruling well his own house, having his children in subjection." I submit that in the language of the Scriptures, pastors are never called children, but Shepherds and Stewards. But in this text, the subjects of the Bishops's charge and government are like unto children—the children of God, the members

of the household of faith. Wherever in the New Testament the word Bishop is used in reference to oversight, it refers to the oversight of the local flock of God and not to pastors. The hue and cry, therefore, of Romanists and High Churchmen, that Bishops are a superior order of ministers to Presbyters and by divine right have the rule and government over them, is false and without foundation in the New Testament. The New Testament stands to prove that in *Name, Ordination, Power and Duties, they are one and the same.*



## CHAPTER IV.

PROOFS THAT ELDERS AND BISHOPS WERE  
ONE AND THE SAME ORDER AND OFFICE  
AS SHOWN BY THE MOST TRUST-  
WORTHY WRITINGS OF THE  
EARLY CHURCH FATHERS.

The early Church Fathers who were in elbow touch with the apostles and familiar with the language, politics, doctrines and customs of apostolic times, are the next in evidence to the apostles themselves. It is agreed by all students of Sacred History and especially of Patristic and Canonical literature, that the most trustworthy writings of the early Church Fathers, are confined to the first three centuries. And to the records of these early periods, the reader is asked to resort in this chapter. Let the Fathers speak, and a free and impartial examination of their testimony will convince the most prejudiced mind, open to conviction, that with them, Bishops were not regarded as a superior order of ministers by divine right

to Presbyters, but one and the same, as to order and office.

Clemens Romanus, the first  
**FIRST CENTURY** of the Patristic writers, lived  
**EVIDENCE.** contemporary with the apostle Paul and was a colaborer of the great apostle to the Gentiles. (Phil. 4:3.) From him we have the first written record of the Apostolic Church after the apostles themselves. The fact that he lived contemporary with St. Paul and others of the apostles, and was associated with them in their apostolate, makes his testimony both weighty and trustworthy. Give audience and we shall hear what he has to say.

In his Epistle to the Corinthian Church he remarks: "Preaching through countries and cities (that is to say the apostles preaching) appointed the first fruits of their conversion to be bishops and deacons over such as should afterwards believe having first proved them by the Spirit. Nor was this anything new, seeing that long before it was written concerning bishops and deacons, for thus saith the Scriptures, In a certain place I will appoint their overseers (bishops) in righteousness and their ministers (dea-

cons) in faith." Again he says, "Ye walked according to the law of God, being subject to those who had the rule over you; and giving the honors that were fitting to such as were Presbyters among you," and still again he says, "For it would be no small sin in us should we cast off those from their episcopate who holily and without blame fulfill the duties of it \* \* \* Blessed are those presbyters who, having finished their course before these times \* \* \* \* for they have no fear lest any one should turn them out of their place." And lastly he says, "Only let the flock of Christ be in peace with the presbyters that are set over it."

Now it will be seen that in these four quotations from Clement, he does not use the terms, Bishops and Presbyters in the sense that they represent two separate and distinct orders, but that they are one and the same. He speaks of Bishops and Deacons, as two separate and distinct orders; but he never speaks of Bishops and Presbyters. In these Clementine utterances two things are noticeable. First, the absence of any mention of the word Presbyter in the first quotation, which argues that with Clement, Presbyters



were the same as Bishops; and secondly, that in the latter three quotations, the word Presbyter is used to the neglect of the word Bishop (and that too in reference to the Episcopate). This interchangeable use of the word Bishop and Presbyter argues conclusively that with Clement, Bishops and Presbyters were one and the same in office.

Ignatius, a learned and voluminous writer, wrote about the close of the first century. The time of his death is given by Dr. Cave as 101 A. D. Fifteen Epistles are accredited to him, but only three of them are considered genuine. He is regarded however as among the strongest witnesses of all the Patristic writers for high Church Episcopacy. At least thirty-five quotations are produced from his Epistles to prove the Episcopal claims of Rome.

But says Stillingfleet, "In all those thirty-five testimonies produced out of Ignatius' Epistles for Episcopacy, I can meet with but one which is brought to prove the least semblance of an institution of Christ for Episcopacy; and if I be not much deceived, the sense of that place is clearly mistaken too."

Let us note a few of his strongest utterances, of which high churchmen make so much ado. In his Epistle to the Magnesians, he says, "The Presbyters preside in the place of the council of the apostles," and in his Epistle to the Smyrnians, he says, "Be ye subject to your Presbyters as unto the apostles of Jesus Christ, our hope." "Let us all reverence the Presbyters as the sanhedrim of God, and college of apostles," "being subject to your Bishop as to the command of God; and likewise to the Presbytery." (Ib.) We shall admit the quotations from Ignatius to be genuine for argument sake, for they will serve our purpose. First he says that, "Presbyters are in the place of the council of the apostles," that they are "the sanhedrim of God, and the college of the apostles." Grant it, what does it argue? Simply this: that if the Presbyters were in the place of the apostles, if they were the sanhedrim of God and college of apostles, the apostles being the highest order of ministers known to the early Church, there could be no order in the Church higher than the Presbyters; for they, the Presbyters were in the place of the apostles. Hence

there could be no superior order to the apostles, they being by an act of heaven, the first and highest order of the Christian ministry. But what of "Being subject to your bishop as to the command of God: and so likewise to the presbytery?" This certainly argues High Church Episcopacy. But let us see, there were no diocesan Bishops as yet. And Ignatius evidently meant that the Church was to be subject to its pastor and council of the Presbytery of the city or church community. It was the custom of apostolic times, that the Elders or pastors of the various Churches in a city or community should meet together for council. All church difficulties were submitted to them for adjudication and their judgment and advice were to be regarded as final.

The language of Ignatius can mean nothing more therefore than that the Church was to be subject to the Elder or Bishop of the Church and the council of his associate Presbyters. That this is the sense of his language is evident also from his manner of writing to various pastors.

In addressing Polycarp, for instance he calls him overseer of the Smyrnians, and ex-

horts him to "make thy office to be respected with all diligence both of body and spirit \* \* \* \* I pledged my soul for those who are subject to the bishop and the presbyters and the deacons." And in his Epistle to the Ephesians, he calls the pastor of the Ephesian Church its Bishop.

How strikingly different his use of the word Bishop from that of modern churchmen! With him, Bishop was not a diocesan officer, but a pastor.

No further comment or dissertation is needed. It is clear from Ignatius' own testimony, that by divine right he recognized no order in the Christian ministry higher than that of the Presbytery. Such is the testimony of the two most learned and trustworthy witnesses of the first century.

SECOND CENTURY  
EVIDENCE.

Justin Martyr, whose birth is given as 100 A. D., and death at 163 A. D., is the first of the Patristic writers of the second century. He speaks of pastors in his First Apology (chaps. 85-88) as *Presidents*. He makes no reference to Presbyters or Bishops, but he denominates the presiding officer of Chris-

tian congregations as *Presidents*. At least six times is this appellation given.

When describing the order and manner of Christian worship, he says (ib., paragraph 65), "Then is brought to the president of the brethren, bread and a cup of water and wine, which he receives and offers up praise, and glory to the Father of all things \* \*

\* \* And when the president has celebrated the eucharist, and all the people have assented, they whom we call deacons give to each of those present, a portion of the eucharistic bread and wine and water, and carry them to those who are absent." This passage from Justin Martyr, needs no lengthy exposition, it is self-explanatory.

The *President* was none other than the pastor or Presbyter. Justin Martyr seems to have been the first to apply the word *President* to the official head of the Church, and very naturally so, for it was during the time when he flourished (155 A. D.) that the Presbyters began to elect one of their number to preside when they came together, instead of following the ancient custom, for the most aged to occupy the center or highest chair. The one elected was called



the *President* or presiding Presbyter. The *President*, therefore of Justin Martyr was but another one of those conventional terms used by the early churchmen to designate the individual, called and set apart to superintend the flock of God. *President* was a new official title in Patristic literature, but used synonymously with Presbyter and Bishop.

Irenæus, a learned churchmen, the date of whose writings is placed somewhere between 182-188 A. D., unlike Justin Martyr mentions, in his several Epistles both Presbyters and Bishops. But it is clear to the unprejudiced student of facts, that he always mentions them synonymously. Note the fact, that Irenæus in his Epistle to Florinus (Euseb. Hist. Ecc.), speaks of Polycarp as, "That blessed and apostolic presbyter," and Polycarp it is well known, was Bishop of Symrna. Likewise in the celebrated controversy between the Asiatic Church and the Roman Church as to the celebration of Easter on the 14th Nisan, Irenæus writes to Victor II, Bishop of Rome and calls his attention to the examples of his predecessors prior to Soter, and calls them not Bishops but Pres-



byters. "And those presbyters who governed before Soter, that Church over which you now preside, I mean Amicetus and Pius and Hyginus with Telesphorus and Xystus, neither observed it (the 14th Nisan) themselves, nor did they permit their successors to observe it." (Euseb. Hist. Ecc. V. 24.)

The thing to be noted here is, that each of the five persons mentioned, are reckoned as Bishop and are so counted in the chain of succession; and yet Irenæus calls them Presbyters. Again, says he, "Wherefore obedience ought to be rendered to those who are Presbyters in the church, who have as we have shown succession from the apostles, and who with the succession of their Episcopacy have a sure deposit of the truth divinely granted to them according to the good pleasure of our Heavenly Father." (Lib. 4, C. 43.)

Now this text is one of the strongest supports of high churchmen. They regard it an argument unanswerable for the superiority of Bishops to Presbyters by divine right. But let us see. Let us put it under the search light of a philosophic analysis. With the close of the apostolic age, the Church

was called upon to contend with numerous philosophies and false doctrines: and the question which confronted the Church was whether it should have a definitely interpreted creed or a chaos of speculations. It was evident that the salvation of the Church from disintegration must rest "upon the basis of a Catholic and apostolic faith," and that those who were the successors of the apostles in office as to faith and doctrine, should be regarded as the custodians of her faith and the exponents of her creed.

This, the farsighted Irenæus saw and urged with all the logic and force of his keen intellect. Dr. Hatch in his learned work on "The Organization of the Early Christian Church" (p. 96) says, "With great rhetorical force and dialectical subtlety, Irenæus, the bishop of the chief Christian Church in Gaul, maintained that the standard of Christian teaching was the teaching of the Churches which the apostles had founded,—which teaching he held to be on all essential points the same. He maintained the existence, and he asserted the authority, of a *fides, catholica*—the general belief of the Christian Churches, which was

also the *fides apostolica*, the belief which the apostles had taught. To that *fides catholica et apostolica*, all individual opinions and interpretations were to be referred. Now it is in the light of these conditions and this teaching of Irenæus, which had become generally accepted by the post apostolic followers, that the president of each Christian society or community should be regarded as the custodian of apostolic faith and doctrine; that we are to understand him when he speaks of the presbyters, who with the succession of their Episcopacy, have a sure deposit of the truth divinely granted to them according to the good pleasure of our Heavenly Father." He evidently meant that as the Presbyters were the successors of the apostles as to faith and doctrine, they were to be believed and obeyed in matters of doctrine, and thus the unity of the Church maintained. This, we think is clearly the meaning of the learned Irenæus which establishes the fact that with him, Presbyters and Bishops were one and the same as to order and office. And if this be not sufficient testimony to establish the official identity of the word Presbyter or Bishop, as

they were known to Irenæus, one other fact confirms our conviction, viz.: that in addressing the Asiatic clergy, he invariably calls them Bishops while on the other hand, when writing to the Roman clergy, addresses them as Presbyters. And yet we know that they were one as to order and office and so recognized by Irenæus.

This conventional or indifferent use of Presbyter and Bishop settles, we say, our conviction that with Irenæus they were one and the same. Such is the testimony of two of the most noted of the Patristic writers of the second century.

**THIRD CENTURY  
EVIDENCE.**

The first Church Father of the third century is Clemens Alexandrinus. He made his impress upon the world and wrote his name in the annals of church history, about 204 A. D. He was pious, learned and fertile with his pen. Unlike many of the Patristic writers, he dealt not so much in Polemic controversies and schismatic quarrels as he did upon the necessity of the new birth and doctrine of Christian perfection. In all of his writings, there is, so far as I have been able to

determine, but one passage which directly bears upon this subject. In the seventh book of *Public Worship* he says, "One part of it is performed by superior ministers, another part by inferior ministers. This superior part is performed by Presbyters; the inferior or servile part by Deacons." Here the identity of Bishops and Presbyters is apparent from the fact that no provision is made for Bishops, as such in the order of *Public Worship*. The logical conclusion therefore to which we are led, is that they were included in the order of the superior ministers who performed the superior part—the Presbyters.

Cyprian, the learned African Bishop, born in Carthage, about the beginning of the third century, began his labors in the Christian Church, 264 A. D., and in less than ten years, sealed his faith in the Gospel as a martyr. He held very exalted views of the Episcopacy, and was, says the Rev. Mr. Powell (*Apostles Succession*, p. 126), "perhaps the highest in his notion on this subject of all genuine fathers." But while he in his views was the most exalted of all the genuine Fathers on the suprem-



acy of Bishops to that of Presbyters, it is evident that he did not regard them so by divine right, but a necessitious arrangement.

While in hiding from Decius, he writes to his clergy, saying, "I beseech you according to your faith and religion that you perform your duties and also those belonging to me so that nothing may be wanting either as to discipline or diligence" (Ep. 5), and then after mentioning certain matters of Church government, he says again, "I rely upon your love and your religion, which I well know, and by these letters I exhort and commit the charge to you, that you whose presence does not expose you to such perils, would discharge my duty, act in my place and perform all those things which the administration of the Church requires." (Ep. 6.) And again, "When by the grace of God, I return unto you, then we will, as our mutual honor requires, confer in common upon those things which have been done, or which still remains to be done." (Ib.)

These passages from the illustrious Cyprian are so self-evident that it seems a travesty upon intelligence to attempt comment. No man, unless he be blind to facts



and ignorant of the logic of language, can deny that these passages do not prove decisively that with Cyprian, Bishops and Presbyters were possessors of rights and powers in common, the Bishop only being regarded as chief among equals—and that by human arrangement. It is further evident that with Cyprian, the Bishopric was an office in the Christian ministry created by the Church instead of an order instituted by God, from his language in rebuking the unchurchly practice of the reception of the lapsed back into the Church by laymen. Says he (Ep. 55, Dr. Barrow's *Pope's Supremacy*), "Nor was there one priest or bishop for a time in the church, nor a judge thought on for a time to supply the room of Christ." And this is what we call, in legal parlance, submitting the question, for he expressly declares "for a time," that is to say in the beginning there was no Bishop or judge, no superior judicial head to supply the room of Christ. And what is the logical inference here? Namely, that if as Cyprian says, "For a time, there was no bishop or judge thought on to supply the room of Christ," then it is just as we have maintained, that

in the beginning of the Church there was no Bishop such as was known in Cyprian's day. Hence, Bishops as superior officers were an after thought, the creatures of human authority, constituted primarily for discipline and order. And this is the testimony of all the post apostles and Patristic writers, that Bishops as such, were not the creatures of divine constitution, but of human arrangement, created in the wisdom of the Church that heresies and schisms might be taken away and the unity and order of the Church preserved.



## CHAPTER V.

### EPISCOPACY AND ITS SUPREMACY.

To the student of history, the evolution of twenty centuries has wrought marvelous changes in the social, intellectual, political and religious realms.

In no sphere of thought and action however, is this more strikingly clear than in the ecclesiastical domain. Between the simple Scriptural Presbyter, Bishop of the first century and the exalted ecclesiastical functionaries known in our day, in various branches of the Christian Church, as Bishops, there is the greatest difference.

Says the Rev. Mr. Hatch (The Organization of the early Christian Church, p. 109), "Between the primitive episcopus and the Mediæval bishop there is so wide an interval that those who are familiar with the picture of the latter, may find it difficult to recognize the portrait of the former." But at the same time continues he, "That the interval is not the chasm of an impassible gulf;

it is a space of historic ground, every step of which can be traced." This we affirm, and in this chapter it shall be our endeavor to trace the successive steps which lead to the introduction of the office of the Bishopric into the Christian ministry and its ultimate supremacy.

As early as the middle of the second century, and on down through subsequent history, we find the Bishop an officer in the Christian ministry superior in rank, dignity and power to the Elder. How came it so?

The Genius and The-  
THE GENIUS AND THEORY ory of the Christian In-  
OF THE INSTITUTION. stitutions tended toward

Episcopacy. It seems

clear from the following analogy that the embryo idea of an Episcopal form of Church government was foreshadowed in the Genius and Theory of the Institution itself, which idea the apostles very naturally developed. "The kingdom of Heaven"—the Christian Church—was analogous to the "Kingdom of David." In the Kingdom of David, a council of Elders officiated in all matters of government and discipline. This council varied in number from three to ten in every

Synagogue; and when in session sat in a semicircle; one of whom, the most aged generally, sat as president of the council in the center of the circle on an elevation above his fellows. He was styled by way of eminence, "The ruler of the Synagogue." (Luke 8:49.)

The early Christian societies, many of which were converted Synagogues very naturally adopted this Presbyterial—Episcopal form of government, a government in which one was chief among equals. "The early Christian churches, were constructed as the Jewish synagogues had been constructed, in accordance with this theory of the nature of the governing body." (Id. p. 3.)

Says the Rev. Mr. Powell (Apostolical Succession, p. 117), "The order was usual, in the meeting of ministers in the primitive Church, for the ministers' chairs to be set in semicircles. The middle chair was raised a little above the rest. The highest presbyter or priest sat in this, and the other presbyters or priests sat around him. The deacons were never allowed chairs; they always stood \* \* \* \* the presbyters sat in them, and thus in council presided over the church in common."

Now from this theory of a Presbyterate form of government adopted by the apostles, which necessitated a *President* either by mutual consent or election, the Episcopal form of government was evolved, and naturally so, when we take under consideration the tendency of the age towards centralization of power.

The Episcopal theory of

APOSTOLIC government seems next to  
SUPERINTENDENCY. have received encouragement  
from the lives of certain of  
the apostles, viz.: James, the Lord's brother,  
at Jerusalem, Timothy at Ephesus, Titus  
at Crete and Paul at Antioch. Each of  
these apostles exercised a sort of general  
supervision over their respective church  
communities. The tremendous influence of  
these men's lives, who had been all but offi-  
cially supreme in their day, was significantly  
suggestive, and did, we believe, give much  
weight to the Episcopal idea of government  
foreshadowed in the genius and theory of  
the coming Kingdom.

Says the Rev. J. C. McGee, D. D. (Apos-  
tolic Organism, p. 164), "Some have re-  
jected the idea of an episcopate as a distinct



clerical office, declare it not to be justifiable in any form by the New Testament or by church history. However, the authority not only of the apostles in their special and unique mission, but the authority which the apostle Paul delegated to Timothy and Titus may doubtless be considered the embryo of the episcopacy of the following age, and which has existed during all the centuries in great parts of the general Church, that being the pattern which the Churches probably followed, and which suggested the nature and measure and functions, and authority which were committed to their bishops at first."

"It is very apparent that the first Churches could not have been put in an aggressive attitude and movement without there first having been some one specially instructed and placed in a position of superior control to push the work. Besides, as the Churches multiplied, there arose naturally a plurality of Elders or pastors, who, when they met in council or conference for the transaction of business of mutual interest must necessarily have had a presiding officer of some kind, by whatever name he might be called. Thus in the apos-

tolic and early post apostolic period, a moderate form of episcopacy was evolved, a natural development of the apostolic pattern and germ."

**TERRITORIAL  
EXPANSION.**

Territorial Expansion was evidently the next step leading to the supremacy of the Bishopric. The apostles and their immediate followers mindful of the divine injunction, "Go ye into all the world and preach the Gospel to every creature," went everywhere "preaching Jesus and him crucified." Every city was seized upon as a center of operation, a nucleus for a Christian community, out from which, when once a permanent footing was secured, they went into the suburbs and rural districts making converts and establishing Churches.

In this radical manner they operated until generally there was a group of Churches which extended far into the suburban parts. Over each of these Churches there was a local Presbyter or pastor. The senior Presbyter by whose efforts, or under whose directions the community had been built up was regarded with great reverence and favor by all the Churches of the community.

His spiritual and official functions were no greater than those of his fellow Presbyters, duly set apart to that office, but the fact that he was the parent pastor of all, there was conceded to him a kind of general superintendency.

Mosheim says (Vol. I. XLII), "A primitive bishop was, as it should seem, none other than the chief or principal minister of an individual Church, which at the period of which we are speaking, was seldom so numerous, but that it could be assembled under one roof \* \* \* \* Whatever arrangements might be deemed eligible were proposed by him to the people for their adoption in a general assembly. In fine, a primitive bishop could neither determine nor enact anything of himself, but was bound to conform to and carry into effect whatever might be resolved by the presbyters and the people. It was not long however before circumstances became so changed as to produce a considerable extension and enlargement of the limits within which the Episcopal government and authority had been at first confined. For the Bishops who presided in the cities were accustomed to send

out into the neighboring towns and country adjacent, certain of their Presbyters for the purpose of making converts and establishing Churches therein; and it being of course deemed but fair and proper that the rural or village congregations, which were drawn together in this way, should continue under the guardianship and authority of the Prelate, by whose counsel and exertion they had been first brought to a knowledge of Christ and his Word, the Episcopal Sees gradually extended into ecclesiastical provinces of varied extent, some greater, some less, to which the Greeks in after times gave the denomination of dioceses."

Thus, it appears that the rapid growth of the Church and multiplication of societies in and around every civic center, and as well as the custom from the earliest apostolic times, of regarding the apostle or Presbyter who was first in the community in point of time and labor, the chief among equals, was the next official step towards the supremacy of the Bishop.

	Next to territorial expansion, the great
DOCTRINAL	Doctrinal
CONTROVERSY.	Controversy which began in
	the latter part of the first
	century, and which was practically ended in

the latter part of the second century, served to distinguish and elevate the Bishop as an officer above the Presbyter, by making the *President* of each Christian community the custodian of the "*fides catholica et apostolica*" (the general belief of the Christian Church, as taught by the apostles).

The first contact of Christianity, was with Genosticism whose leading champion was Philo, a learned Jewish Greek philosopher, whose birth was coincident with that of Christ; and whose philosophy grew up contemporaneously with—and I may say—within the pales of Judaism itself.

Genosticism was a combination of Oriental theosophy and Platonic philosophy with Judaism, and also contained many elements of Christianity. Philo and his disciples believed in God, but did not accept the divinity of Christ. With them the Old Testament was an allegory. They believed that nothing was real, all was but the symbol of the unapparent. From these fundamental ideas or beliefs, the great Genostic system developed into many special systems, all of which sought either to adopt or absorb Christianity.

It was an age of paradoxes, of unsettled opinions and faiths. The Church as such, did not know what it believed, nor what to believe. It was a trying ordeal for Christianity.

But the trial raised a problem—a problem which was not only to be fundamental in its bearing upon Christian belief, but upon the polity of the Church for all time to come. Amid this chaotic sea of philosophy and this nebulous world of belief, the problem arose and surcharged with all of the eloquence of multitudes of earnest souls seeking after truth, demanded an answer to the question, what shall we believe; what shall be the rule of faith; what shall be the basis of Christian union? It plead long and eloquently for an answer, but for a time no answer came. At last the silence was broken. It was the voice of Irenæus the greatest theologian of the age.

With all the strength of his master intellect, and force of his soul, he maintained that the Church had a belief which sought no compromise with Oriental theosophy or Platonic philosophy, but rested solely on the faith and teachings of the apostles. In



other words he maintained that the *fides apostolica*—the belief which the apostles had taught—should be *the fides catholica*—the general belief of the Christian Church.

By reason of his eloquence and force of reasoning, it was not long until not only the Church in Gaul, accepted his teachings, but the Church in general.

But the question was not yet settled. A concurrent question, equally weighty in importance, arose. How was the faith and teachings of the apostles to be known; and who were to be its expositors and conservators? Under the Mosiac dispensation, the Rabbis were the custodians and the expositors of divine truth. Guided as the apostles and their immediate followers were in the organic formation of the Christian Church, by certain laws and customs which had held sway under the Jewish economy, it was very natural that the Rabbinical idea would be incorporated here, that is to say, that inasmuch as the Presbyters had been taught by the apostles, and duly set apart by the imposition of their hands, to teach and govern, they were the logical custodians of the faith and teachings of the

Church on earth. But these Presbyters being many in every church community, there was the danger still of many "false doctrines." The necessity for one rule of faith, for unity of teaching and belief was supreme, and this in the light of past experiences and of concurrent events could only be had by a single Presbyter in each church community, standing in relation to that community as the Rabbis did to the Rabbinical schools—the custodians and expositors of divine truth. And the person thus chosen was very naturally the elder Presbyter or *President* of each local church community.

This course seems not to have been fully approved of at first, but by the middle of the third century it was generally adopted throughout the Church: consequently, in the Clementines, says Dr. Hatch (*Apostolic Organization*, p. 98), "For the first time, the president of the community is regarded in the light of the custodian of the rule of faith, in express distinction from the presbyters who are intrusted only with that which is relative to their main function—the teaching of the maxims of Christianity." (Clementine Epis. 365.)

**ORDER AND  
DISCIPLINE.**

The supremacy of the Bishopric which grew out of the afore-mentioned conditions in the order of providence, seems to have received its final enthronement in the necessity for order and discipline. Almost contemporaneously with the discussion of doctrine, arose the question of order and discipline growing out of the question of the proper distribution of church finances among the poor, and of the restoration of the "lapsed." But of the latter more particularly, under the Decian persecution which began during the middle of the third century, the most inhuman measures were adopted to destroy. "The sword, fire, wild beasts, hooks of steel, the wheel, red hot irons, chains and whatever else would inflict pain were brought into requisition." To avoid these fearful persecutions, many of the Christians fled to the deserts of Egypt and other places of safety. After these barbarous persecutions were over, many of those who fled from persecution, or renounced Christianity by worshipping at heathen altars, desired to return to the communion of the Church.

This raised a question—a question of discipline, which the Church had not been called upon hitherto to meet. There were those in the Church who had stood the persecution, who regarded their weaker brethren no longer fit members of Christ's body, in that they did not suffer persecution "for his name's sake," while there were others who were disposed to look upon the "lapsed" with commiseration.

At first the Church passed upon each individual "lapsed" for readmission. Later, when persecution forbade the assembling of the whole body, the church officers acted as confessors for the Church collectively. It was not long however, until the cry of bribery, of corruption, and of illegal admissions were made against the confessors. This complaint led to the enactment of the rule by the Council of Arles, 314, A. D. (Clementine Ep. 26), "That presbyters and deacons should not readmit any into the Church without the concurrence of the Bishop." In many local Churches this rule was met with disfavor, but its re-enactment by the Spanish Council of Elvia; the Gallican Council of Orange; and the African Council of Car-

thage, bore down in less than a century, all opposition, and the Bishop was officially supreme in all matters of discipline.

Retrospecting now, it seems clear, that the supremacy of the Bishop grew by force of circumstances, and growth or evolution was perfectly simple and natural. In New Testament times, Presbyters and Bishops were synonymous terms, though technically there was a shade of difference, the former denoted order, while the latter denoted office, but in their usage as applied to the apostles, they were synonymous. A little later, by reason of the territorial expansion of the Church and its phenomenal growth in the West, where it came directly under the influence of the civil government of Rome, the Presbyter presiding not only over his own local Church, but over all those in his community by reason of seniority, was given the title, Bishop or Overseer, a title which was both accommodating and suggestive, in that it addressed itself to the heathen mind as well as to Jewish understanding.

This assumption of authority led to a greater assumption of power. The metropolitan Bishop claimed superiority over all

the rural Bishops. And thus the assumption went on until Rome, the strongest civil center of all claimed superiority and jurisdiction over all the world. This assumption of Rome, backed by its political influence and aided by such men as Leo I, Gregory I, and finally by Hilderbrand or Gregory VII, made its way until there was not only the assumption of the Pope of Rome over Bishops; but also the assumption of a theocratic rule of the Pope over all nations of the world.

Thus, I have mentioned certain providential causes, educational forces, and influences which led up to a reformation in ecclesiastical government during the second and third centuries, out of which was born a polity in keeping with the growth and expansion of the Church, and the new conditions and civil government in which it found itself more and more a factor.



## CHAPTER VI.

### BROKEN LINKS IN THE ROMAN CHAIN OR THE NULLITY OF APOSTOLIC SUCCESSION.

THE DOCTRINE  
STATED.

The Doctrine of Apostolic Succession, briefly stated, is, that Peter was the first Bishop of Rome, and that he was given by direct commission of our Lord, a primacy over the entire Church of Christ on earth; and that this primacy carried with it, besides honor and rank, direct and supreme jurisdiction over all the other apostles. In a word, it teaches that Peter was appointed Christ's Vicar upon earth, and that this vicarate was not given to him only, but that it was delegated to him for his life time, with power to delegate it to his successor; and that he did delegate said power to his successor and his successor to the next successor; and so there has come down to us through this infallible succession an unbroken chain of Bishops, upon whom this plenary power has rested.

Moreover this doctrine, exclusive and intolerant, in its nature, as it is bold and arrogant in its assumption, claims, by reason of what modern Roman theologians are pleased to call the "Privilege of Peter," a complete monopoly upon divine grace and power requisite to a validly ordained ministry; and hence discards all who are not subscribers to the faith of Popedom, as "Schismatics,"—"Aliens from the faith,"—"out of the appointed way to heaven" and such as are left to the "uncovenanted mercies of God?"

To quote directly from the Canon Law of the Church of Rome, it is said "He that acknowledges not himself to be under the Bishop of Rome, and the Bishop of Rome is ordained of God to have primacy over all the world, is a heretic and cannot be saved, nor is of the flock of Christ." The decrees of the Vatican Council in 1870 declares:

1. "If anyone shall say that blessed Peter, the apostle was not appointed by Christ the Lord, the Prince of all the apostles, and the visible head of the whole Church militant; or that he received a primacy of honor only, and not directly or immediately one of

true and proper jurisdiction from the same our Lord Jesus Christ, let him be anathema.”

2. “If any should say that it is not by the institution of Christ the Lord himself, or by divine right, that blessed Peter should have a perpetual line of succession in the primacy over the Church Universal, or that the Roman Pontiff is not the successor of blessed Peter in this primacy, let him be anathema.”

Such is a succinct statement of the doctrine of Apostolic Succession. Now it is upon this assumptive claim of papal ordinations, reaching from the Petrine chair in Rome to the present Pope Leo XIII., that papalist base their claim to divine primacy, and to which all must cling for salvation, there being no other visible, valid means of grace. Mark you, we say assumptive claim, and this we mean with all that the language implies.

For unless Peter's primacy can be proved by a clear and honest interpretation of the Scriptures, and every ordinal link in the chain from him down can be shown to be perfect and strong, interlinked each in the other, and this continuity, without a single

break, substantiated by indisputable historic testimony; then the whole successional argument must be seen to rest on a mere ecclesiastical assumption, and the so-called chain of Apostolic Succession falls to pieces as a rope of sand.

**THE INVALIDITY OF PETER'S PRIMACY AS SHOWN FROM THE SCRIPTURES.**

Romanists claim first of all the primacy of Peter on the ground of divine authority, given by Christ in three distinct and specific commands. The first is the following: "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it. And I will give unto thee the keys of the kingdom of heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (St. Matt. 16:17-19.) Romanists maintain that this Scripture teaches exclusively that Peter was here referred to by our Lord, as the future official head of the Church, the founda-

tion upon which the whole superstructure was to rest, and the source of all authority, both ecclesiastical and spiritual.

But this is clearly a prejudiced interpretation. To get the indubitable meaning of Christ's language in this Scripture, it must be sought for in the light of the whole narrative, and all of the incidents and questions leading up to it.

Studying it in this light, it is apparent at once that Christ was not after a person, but a confession of faith. Amid his waxing fame, many theories and opinions were afloat as to his personality. The purpose of Christ was to correct these false and misleading conceptions of his person and office by drawing from the apostles a confession; a confession which comprehended the God-man, and accepted him as the world's Christ and Redeemer; a confession which should stand forever as the basic foundation of his Church on earth. And in proof of this statement let the narrative stand in evidence.

Beginning with the thirteenth verse of the chapter above cited, it is said that: "When Jesus came into the coasts of Cæsarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying,

Whom do men say that I, the Son of man, am?" Mark you, the question was not addressed to Peter individually but to the disciples collectively, "*and he asked his disciples,*" all of them. "And they said," that is they answer in common, "Some say that thou art John the Baptist; some Elias; and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets." Having adroitly drawn from them a consensus of opinion respecting himself, he pressed the question upon them individually, not to Peter particularly, but to the entire brotherhood of disciples. "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?" And Simon Peter replying for all of the disciples, "Answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." This confession of apostolic faith, voiced by Peter, and embracing as it did all of the elements and conditions requisite to salvation, was approved by Christ in the following remarkable declaration, "And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven. And I say unto thee, That thou art Peter and upon this rock I will build my Church;



and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." Seizing upon this commendation of Simon by our Lord, "Thou art Peter (petra rock), Romanists interpret it to mean, that he was thereby signalized, the corner stone of the Church. The true interpretation is to be found however in the Hebrew custom of giving significant names, not solely or even chiefly, to describe qualities in the person who bore them, but to commemorate truths in which they were concerned, and this twofold purpose seems to have been in the mind of Christ, when he rechristened Simon. He simply meant to commend the appropriateness of his name, illustrative of his character and to commemorate in the apostolic company the great truth uttered by him. And now if we will divorce the words, "Thou art Peter," from the words, "and upon this rock I will build my church" and get the true connection, which is, "Thou art rightly called Peter," we will have the divine approval upon Peter's confession of faith; upon which Christ said, "I will build my church." It is upon this confession of faith alone that the Church must rest and nothing more.

The next clause in this Scripture which demands our attention is the famous binding and loosing clause, "And I will give unto thee, the keys of the kingdom of heaven; and whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth, shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever thou shall loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." This clause, Romanists hold, teaches expressly an individual endowment of special privileges to Peter. But this is claiming more than the Scripture warrants. If we will keep before our minds the fact, that the disciples were being addressed collectively and not individually we will observe that the binding and loosing power was not peculiar to Peter only, but to all of the disciples, as the context proves.

Immediately after the Cesarea Philippi meeting, Jesus came to Capernaum. and lodged in the home of Simon, where he was called upon for tribute money. Peter was sent away to pay the same, and during his absence Christ conferred the same plenary power on the other disciples saying, "Verily I say unto you, Whatsoever ye shall bind on earth shall be bound in heaven: and whatsoever ye shall loose on earth shall be

loosed in heaven." (Matt. 18:18.) And lastly, after his resurrection; in his parting blessing and final commission, we have the following: "Then said Jesus to them again, Peace be unto you: as my Father hath sent me, even so send I you. And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained." (St. John 20:21-23.) Nothing can be clearer than the fact that these Scriptural passages prove beyond a shadow of doubt that this plenary power of binding and loosing was not peculiar to Peter or any one of the apostles, but to all alike. This being true, the argument for Peter's primacy, so far as this Scripture is concerned, is absolutely groundless.

Mark, the friend and amanuensis of Peter, having recorded nothing that would give strength to the primacy claim, we pass to the Gospel of St. Luke, in which we find the following: "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not:

and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren." (St. Luke 22:31, 32.) Linguists tell us that the Greek word for "you," in the text, is plural in fact as well as in form, which makes it evident that all of the disciples stood in danger of Satan's sieve, Peter alone being the one whose faith would fail, and whose fall and denial is here foretold.

Thus instead of this Scripture pointing out any particular sanctity of character or pre-eminence of authority in Peter over the other disciples, it actually puts him below the level of his colleagues, for he is informed of all of the apostolic number, he alone would fail to stand the test, and he is bidden, when "converted to strengthen his brethren," by reminding them of his own bitter and dangerous experience, lest any of them should fall away from their Master. This is confessedly the true interpretation of this Scripture; and since to strengthen by exhortation is in no sense akin to the act of exercising authority, this Scripture gives no support to the papal sovereign doctrine.

The last important Scripture upon which popedom rests the primacy of Peter, is that

found in the Gospel of St. John: "So when they had dined, Jesus saith to Simon Peter, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these? He said unto him, Yea, Lord; thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my lambs. He saith to him again the second time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? He saith unto him, Yea, Lord; Thou knowest that I love thee. He saith unto him, Feed my sheep. He saith unto him the third time, Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me? And he said unto him, Lord, thou knowest all things; thou knowest that I love thee. Jesus saith unto him, Feed my sheep." (St. John 21:15-17.) This Scripture, like its predecessors, it is maintained, clearly indicates a primacy in that, in Christ's threefold injunction to Peter to feed his lambs and sheep, he was made chief Shepherd over the entire flock of Christ, the apostles included. But here likewise we are barred from giving credence to this theory by at least two insurmountable obstacles.

First, instead of bestowing a primacy upon Peter, the language of Christ, simply indicated a restoration of the fallen disciple to his apostleship. Peter, as foretold in the



previously quoted Scripture, had forsaken and denied his Lord in the hour of trial; and he had returned to the world. He, in whom they had trusted to redeem Israel, was now dead and entombed. Peter in company with other disciples had gone a fishing. In the gray dawn of the morning as they came from their fruitless toil, Jesus appeared on the shore of the sea of Tiberias, and after miraculously providing them with breakfast, Jesus said unto Peter who had openly and boldly denied him, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me more than these?" That is more than these fishes laying in the net before us, which language, interpreted in a broader sense, meant more than the world and its possessions to which you have turned from following after me; and Peter repentant at this gentle and God-like rebuke thrice confessed his supreme and abiding love for the Master, and was rewarded with forgiveness and restoration to his apostleship with the thrice divine injunction, "feed my sheep." Thus it appears that this Scriptural injunction was in no sense primatical but restorative.



Secondly: It in no sense conferred any special authority upon Peter over the other apostles as the context (John 21:17) adequately proves. "It is obvious that if Peter had received jurisdiction over John only a few moments before, his question was perfectly legitimate and reasonable, and merited a reply as being his concern, because affecting one for whom he had just been made responsible. But the answer he actually receives can denote nothing short of John's entire independence, and the restriction of Peter's own commission to attend to his own specific and limited share of apostolic work, with no right of control over John." (Petrine Claims, Chap. I, p. 9.)

Thus from a legal standpoint of view, these favorite Roman passages of Scripture give no warrant for the belief in an apostolic primacy. But to the contrary, they teach most emphatically that all of the apostles were coequal in power, holding alike the keys of authority and that Peter was not alone "the rock" upon which the Church was built; but that each of the apostles was a foundation stone, "Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone." (Eph. 2: 20 )

**BROKEN LINK NUM-  
BER ONE.**

The story of Peter's  
journey to Rome and  
his twenty-five years'  
Bishopric in that city

is the first link in the chain of Holy Succession. But transcendently important as this fact is, or should be, if true; it is without the "thus saith the Lord." Not a single passage of Scripture, either in the Gospels or in the Epistles can be found to support the fallacious claim.

The only inspired evidence that can be brought to bear in its support, is the strained exegesis of I Peter 5:13. But this Scripture is so ambiguous in its meaning that its evidence is wholly insufficient, being explained and supported by no context. To the contrary, however, there are numerous passages of Scripture bearing upon Peter's ministry and life which make it highly probable that Peter was never so much as at Rome. Ultramontaniam holds that Peter came to Rome in the second year of the reign of the Emperor Claudius, 43 A. D., to withstand Simon Magus. But according to Luke, in Acts 12:3, 4, he is found living in Jerusalem, where he was cast in prison by Herod

Agrippa in the last year of his reign 44 A. D., two years after the time he is said to have assumed control of the Episcopal See of Rome. In Acts 15:6, Luke mentions Peter as still residing at Jerusalem and this, at least seven years after, for while some chronologists claim that this was in the ninth year of Claudius, others hold that it was in the eleventh. A few years later and fifteen years from the time he is said to have taken up his residence in the Imperial City, when Paul went up to Jerusalem to report his work among the Gentiles, he found Peter, still residing in the Holy City, a pillar of the Church (Gal. 2:9), who afterward followed or accompanied him to Antioch (Gal. 2:11). This together with the silence maintained by the Apostle Paul, as to any mention of Peter's work or name in connection with the city of Rome, in both his Epistles in 58 A. D., and in his subsequent visit in 63 A. D., five years later, is scarcely to be accounted for on any other theory, than that he was not there. For it seems reasonable, had Peter been living in Rome, when Paul wrote his famous letter expressing a desire to see them (Rom 1:11), or when he person-

ally visited that city in after years, he would have made some mention of the distinguished apostle; especially so, since he, in his Epistle, mentioned the names of thirty-five prominent persons to whom he sent special salutations.

But up until this time, 63 A. D., there is no proof whatever that Peter had any individual or official relations with the church at Rome, or that the Romans had ever seen or heard of him except such as might have been in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost (Acts 2:10), when he preached the inaugural sermon of the coming kingdom.

It is the testimony of Patristic writers confirmed by the ablest Continental, British and American theologians, that the story of Peter's bishopric at Rome, had its origin with Papias, Bishop of Hierapolis, in the early part of the second century. He was the author of the tradition, and Eusebius, the Father of Church History, using such expressions as "It is reported," "It is said," etc., refers to it as a doubtful tradition. F. Turrentin, one of the most learned of modern writers and who shows great familiarity with Patristic lore, says (Turrentin Opera,

Vol. III, p. 148), "The unanimity of the ancients, who firmly held that Peter lived and died at Rome, has absolutely no weight, for this story has its origin in Papias, Bishop of Hierapolita, in Phrygia, who, according to the testimony of Eusebius, was not merely of mediocre talents, ignorant, and credulous, but deceptive and inclined to fables; who has handed down many incredible and unrecorded stories, more like fables than reliable histories. (Euseb. Lib. III, Ch. 3.) He was also the author of the story of the Chiliasts. He was the first to write that Peter had been at Rome. After him followed Hegesippus, Irenæus, Clemens, Alexander and others, and so their statement is valueless, according to the testimony of the same Eusebius, who stated that the majority of the ecclesiastical writers, especially Irenæus, gave occasion for the same error," and continues he, "Since therefore, the credibility of this same writer is so doubtful in other matters, how can we have our assent when there are so many arguments from the Scriptures, which have been taken up in order, to the contrary?"



To use the language of Kurtz in his Church History, page 65, "This whole legend about Peter's bishopric at Rome—according to Eusebius from the year 42 to 67, is derived from the heretical, pseudo—epigraphic, Clementine's Recognitions—an authority entirely untrustworthy." Thus the first link in the chain under a critical test of its strength, instead of bearing undisputable evidence of having been forged in the furnace of truth, and welded by the hammer of authentic history, appears to be nothing more than a traditional fallacy.

**BROKEN LINK NUMBER  
TWO.**

According to the theory of Holy Successionists, each Pontiff must of necessity transmit personally, the grace, office and plenary power received "by the hands of the apostles" to his successor. But where is the proof of this? Echo answers "Where?" If the hands of Peter directly forged and welded the ordinal link next to him, or in other words, if he personally appointed and ordained his successor to the papal chair, this orderly and apostolic method has certainly not been kept up. And so



far forth as history will show, that there has been any breach or diversion from the divinely appointed method, then the chain will be broken and the succession invalidated.

Let us see. There has been, at least, seven different modes employed in creating "popes" and all differing from the Apostolic:

1. After Peter, they were created by the nomination of the Bishop and the election of priests and people. This was the custom practiced during the second and third centuries.

2. By the nomination of the emperor or empress, as they were moved by political impulse and elected by the vote of the Bishop. "In the fourth century, Emperor Constantine nominated profligated heathen youth and men accused of flagrant crimes to supplant venerable Bishops whose positions they secured by bribery and political intrigue." (See *Methodist Episcopacy Valid*, p. 33.)

3. By appointment of the emperor alone. Bishop Burnett says that for three hundred years, "The popes were made upon the mandates of the emperor," and that many

of them were anti-popes, schismatics, and monsters of iniquity. Instances are to be found in the imperial action in regards to Boniface I. (Baron. Ann. 419), and also Pope John. (Petrine Claims, p. 309.)

4. By prostitution, Baronius says that popes were intruded into office by powerful men and women, and that the papal chair was frequently the price of prostitution. (See Baron. Ann. 897, IV.; 908, VI., VII.; 912, VIII.) Mosheim says that, "Theodora, a very lewd woman, who controlled all things at Rome, made John X., who was Archbishop of Ravenna, succeed to the papal chair. For at this time, nothing was conducted regularly at Rome, but everything was carried by bribery or violence." (Mosheim Vol. II., p. 130.)

5. By Cardinals, a new order of ecclesiastics made by the decree of Pope Nicholas II. in his Lateran Synod at Rome, in 1059, (Petrine Claims. p. 330), and unheard of for the first one thousand years after Christ.

6. By the appointment of Popes in general council, instances: Sutri, Pisa, Constance and Basil. In 1046, Henry of Germany—head of the "Holy Roman Empire was called

into Italy, to put an end to the reign of vice and disorder at Rome. He caused the three rival popes to be deposed by a synod at Sutri, and a German prelate, Suidger, Bishop of Bamberg, to be appointed under the name of Clement II., by whom he was crowned Emperor, and after Clements death, Henry raised to the Papacy three German popes in succession. This was a departure from all previous customs."

7. By reverting to the Nicholas method of Popes making Cardinals, and Cardinals making Popes. The present method is, that the Pope shall appoint various persons to the College of Cardinals, and on the death of the Pope, the College shall meet and elect one of their number the successor of the dead Pope.

And now what do these facts logically prove? Simply this: that the diverting from the Petrine method of "appointing," and the adoption of the illegitimate and heterogeneous methods of pontifical elections, has broken the apostolic chain and invalidated the succession. Hence, there was not and could not be a personal transmission of the grace, office and power apostolic, "The il-

legitimacy of the methods, the intervening spaces, as to time, in welding the consecutive links, which were often months and sometimes years," made it impossible. (Debate on the Roman Catholic Religion, p. 135.) To say nothing of the often simple civil induction of Popes into the chair of Peter, many of whom were laymen, never having received Christian orders, makes the doctrine of the transmission of sacerdotal power from Peter down through a tactual succession of Pontiffs absolutely preposterous.

As well might the present Sultan of Turkey tell me that Solomon's Mosque, built by Mohammedan devotees, is the Holy Temple Solomon built on Mount Zion, as to tell me there has been a personal transmission of the mysterious apostolic grace, through this broken and corrupt line of Roman Pontiffs. It is not only preposterous; it is ridiculously absurd.

The illegitimacy and irregularities of pontifical creations, from apostolic times to the present, is the second broken link.

BROKEN LINK NUM-  
BER THREE.

The numerous schisms of popedom is the next fact which proves the fallacy of Apostolic Succession. From the Novatian Schisms 251 A. D. to the Council of Constance in 1414; there were twenty-nine schisms in the Roman Catholic Church, and some of them lasting for quite half a century. For the last one thousand years, there have been over one hundred Bishops or Popes of Rome, and during this period, there have been, at thirteen different times, two or even more claimants or pretenders to the pontifical chair at Rome. Just think of it! Two or more claimants for the same office at the same time, when legitimately and divinely as they themselves assert, there can be but one person.

It is worthy of note, in view of this fact, that in Roman polity three things are essential to the pontifical claim: Legal Election, Canonical Induction and Actual possession of the Papal Chair. But for centuries legal election and canonical induction have been lost to view, and the possession of the chair by whatever means, fair or foul, has been the only warrant of authority.

Under the Roman Empire, it did not matter by what method Cæsar obtained the purple; whether he made his way to the throne of the world by inheritance, by election, by successful rebellion, or by murder, so long as he could maintain himself on this dangerous throne, his legal rights were unimpeachable. Such seems to have been the policy of the papality. To obtain possession of the Holy Chair, was often more prized than the throne of an empire. Every conceivable diabolism was resorted to, intrigues, bribery, simony and even murder.

Hildebrand, known as Gregory VII., it is said, poisoned, at least, half a dozen Popes, and then without election, thrust himself into the popedom. Powell says, "Frequently the most cunning, the most powerful, the most warlike, the most wicked of them succeeded in deposing his less cunning, less powerful, less warlike, less wicked, opponent." (Apostolic Succession, p. 225.) Now while it must be admitted that it is often very difficult to distinguish between Rome political and ecclesiastical, still it must be remembered that according to an axiom in Latin theology and Canon Law, "a Pope to be the legiti-



mate successor of Peter, must be Pope *de jure* as well as Pope *de facto*; and that unlawful possession of the papacy, confers no valid rights whatever. (Petrine Claims, p. 306.) It is plain, therefore, that where several had assumed the office at the same time all could not be genuine and legitimate claimants to the same chair. Only one could be the true and lawful successor. But whether one or many of those who have set on the papal throne in the last one thousand years, were legitimate successors of Peter, no man living or dead can tell. But we do know from the testimony of the most ancient and learned, the most just and revered, that the schismatic confusion of a thousand years, bred rivalries; created usurpers, and cast a cloud of doubt over the whole canonicate, and thus rendered abortive the transmission of the Apostolic grace, schismatic doubts being the effectual estoppel.

For Bellarmine, one of the highest Latin authorities expressly declares in Decree Council, Lib. II. Chap. 19, Section XIX., "A doubtful Pope is accounted no Pope. And so no legitimate Pope, no Apostolic succession." And this being confessedly so, they

themselves being judges, the chain yields to the strain of "Schisms" and breaks again.

**BROKEN LINK NUM-  
BER FOUR.**

In a number of Canons, acknowledged by both Romanists and Anglicans, it is declared that none can be true ministers of Christ, who are immoral, heretical, schismatical, or non-aged. This being true, having the warrant of Scripture, the fact which we now adduce is to wit: that the Holy chair often filled with the vilest monsters of iniquity, is evidence *de facto* that if there had been such a thing otherwise, as an indefeasible transmission of apostolic virtue and power, it was estopped in the lives of those ungodly successors of the Galilean Fisherman, yea, successors, who uncalled, and unappointed of God, or any ecclesiastical regulation, intruded themselves into the Holy office.

From the founding of the Roman hierarchy up until the beginning of the eighteenth century, there had been in all, two hundred and sixty-two possessors or occupants of the papal chair. Prideaux, a learned historian and a devout churchman, who made a careful analysis and summary of this venerable list

of "holy ones," numbered among them, "thirty-eight usurping Nimrods, forty luxurious Sodomites, forty Egyptian Magicians, forty-one devouring Abaddons, twenty incurable Babylonians." (Introduction for Reading Histories, p. 67.) But let me instance a few of the many holy fathers through whom the succession has come.

Pope Vigilius waded to the pontifical chair through the blood of his predecessor. Pope Pelagius was forced to clear himself from the suspicion of having murdered this same Vigilius, by swearing his innocence upon the Crucifix and the Gospels. Pope Alexander VI., infamous for his debauchery in keeping a Roman strumpet, Vanozia, by whom he had many children, and then lived in incest with his daughter Lucretia, procured the popedom by simony. Joan, a woman disguised as a man, was elected and confirmed as Pope John VIII., and held the popedom one year, one month and four days after her confirmation, dying as the result of the shame which had overtaken her by those about her.

Since the Reformation, this story has been discredited by a number of Protestant

historians, but Prideaux affirms that there are fifty authorities in the Roman Catholic Church, who place upon it their seal of approval. We must therefore account Popess Joan (John VIII.) as filling her place in the chain, and so recognize her as Pope, there being no other way to shake hands with Peter than through her succession. Pope Stephen, says Howell, "was the most wicked of men." Pope John IX., son of Sergius III., by the strumpet Marozia, was designated "a devil" and was accounted the vilest and blackest monster that ever defiled the Roman pontificate.

But space forbids these individual mentionings of this monstrous list of pontifical holiness. Suffice it to say that Genbard in his "Chronicles," 904 A. D., says "For nearly 150 years, about fifty Popes deserted wholly the virtue of their predecessors, being Apostate rather than "Apostolic," and Baronius, eight years later (912 A. D.), confirms this statement by exclaiming, "What is then the face of the whole Roman Church! How exceedingly foul it is! When most sordid and abandoned women ruled at Rome; at whose will the Sees were changed; Bish-

ops were presented, and what is horrid to hear and unutterable: false Pontiffs, the paramours of these women, were intruded into the chair of Peter and made false Popes; for who can say that they could be lawful Popes who were intruded by such harlots?" (Baronius Annals, 912 A. D.)

Now it is clear from the facts set forth, that if Apostolic Succession was ever a reality, it was made nugatory in the lives of these ungodly Pontiffs, whose judges were themselves Romanists. The words of their mouths and the meditations of their hearts, as set forth in the Council Decrees of Chalcedon, 415; of Nicasa (the second), 787; of Constantinople 681 and 869; of Rome 679 and 963; of Sutri 1046; of Pisa 1409; of Constance 1415; all declare in bold and anathematic language that all Intrusionists, Heretics, Simonists, Immoralists and Schismatics were usurpers and false Popes; and prove at the same time the illogicalness of their claims.

For if they were usurpers and false Popes in the pontificate, as they acknowledge, then it is proof *de facto* that the succession was invalidated, for the same councils declared



that usurpers, schismatics, etc., are not true ministers of Christ, nor successors of the Blessed Peter. And if "not true ministers of Christ, nor successors of the Blessed Peter," then what becomes of the Holy succession during their false pontificates, or in other words, during the interregnum when there was no true Pope?

The answer is clear; if Apostolic Succession was ever an entity, it was invalidated. But aside from the legal phase of this question, the idea that apostolic power, virtue and grace, so essential to ministerial orders, could pass through such foul, bloody and iniquitous hands, is not only repugnant to the dictates of common sense; but contrary to the teachings of our Lord and the spirit of Christianity. So holy a religion is Christianity, that its fundamental principle laid down in God's Word, is that those who administer before Him must be holy; and that He recognizes the ministrations of such only as meet the requirements of the third chapter of First Timothy and the first chapter of Titus. The false Pontiffs before mentioned, wanting in the several qualifications therein specified, and falling without the



scope of ministerial characterization, are irrevocably debarred by the Scriptures, and by the administration of the Holy Spirit from having "neither part nor lot in this matter"—The Christian Ministry—their hearts being "not right in the sight of God." (Acts 8:21.) In examining the lives of the Popes from Gregory the Great to Leo X., scarcely one can be found who gave evidence of a renewed heart much less a divine call.

How then could these men impart spiritual blessings, spiritual authority, and the Holy Ghost to others, when many of them did not so much as "Know whether there be any Holy Ghost?" The answer is plain. These false Pontiffs were no more the possessors of apostolic power and virtue, than Simon Magus, being by nature incapacitated to receive it. But why should I multiply words in proving what is already plain? In the language of Dr. Adam Clark, "It is idle to employ time in proving that there is no such thing as an uninterrupted succession of this kind. It does not exist, it never did exist; it is a silly fable, invented by ecclesiastical tyrants, and supported by clerical coxcombs."

## CHAPTER VII.

### ANGLICANISM OR "THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE."

That transcendently important religious movement which began in the fourteenth century, known as the "Reformation," reached its culminative point in the sixteenth century under Henry VIII. At the refusal of Pope Clement VII., to grant King Henry a divorce from his lawfully wedded wife Catherine, that he might marry the more youthful and beautiful Anne Boleyn, King Henry following the advice of his Prime Minister, Thomas Cranmer, rebelled against the Pope and declared himself to be "The only supreme head of the Church of England on earth." Thus was the beginning of that exclusive and intolerant hierarchy known as the established Church of England. This radical move upon the part of Henry VIII., and the Roman Communion in England in discarding papal authority caused their excommunication by the Church of Rome.

But the Established Church had behind it the powerful sentiment of religious liberty, and the political influence of the throne, and was therefore destined to live and become a powerful factor in the moral reformation, and in the spiritual redemption of Christianity from the throes of Roman dominancy and depravity. And such it has been, for to be true to history it must be conceded, that while Henry "meant it not so," it must be said of it, as Joseph said of the unrighteous conduct of his brethren, "God meant it unto good, to bring to pass, as it is this day, to save much people alive."

This unique child of Providence—Anglicanism, by which term we mean the Established Church of England and its offshoot, the Protestant Episcopal Church, which has done much to lift the moral standard of Christianity and to preserve vital religion upon the face of the earth, holds the same untenable and fallacious position on questions of divine orders, and office, as the Roman Catholic Church. And since many Methodist writers not wholly free from the influence of sacerdotalism have striven ingeniously to lay claims to whatever validity there might

be in historic orders through Wesley, a priest of the Established Church of England or through White, of the Protestant Episcopal Church, it is our purpose here to show without any reference to its ecclesiastical recognition by the Christian world in general or its divine approval of the Most High, that its claims to "The Historic Episcopate," which is but another name for apostolical succession, is as groundless and undesirable by the Church that recognizes a direct and divine call from on high, as the fabulous, claims of the Roman Church.

What of the orders of this Church? What of their origin? Henry VIII., as I have said, having rebelled against papal Rome, and discarded the right of the Pope to exercise any authority either civilly or ecclesiastically within his kingdom, was in turn, with his rebellious communicants excommunicated. Granting it for argument's sake, that the Church of Rome was the possessor of that mystical grace called Apostolic Succession, and that the founders of the Established Church of England, Cranmer, Ridley, Parker, Hodgkins and Miles Cloverdale, had received this so-called succession when they

were first ordained priests in the Church of Rome, had they power to transmit this gift, this succession to the Church of England, or any other Church after their excommunication? The answer is verily, no.

THE SUCCESSION  
LOST.

If as we say, it be conceded that the founders of the Established Church were the possessors of the succession when first ordained priests in the Church of Rome, it was lost to them in their withdrawal and excommunication. The very act of their secession of necessity invalidated all derived authority.

It is a universally admitted principle in ecclesiastical law, that no one who withdraws from or is excommunicated by a Church, can exercise by the authority of that Church any right, power, privilege or authority, received while a member of that Church. The moment such a one withdraws, or is excommunicated, that moment his orders become invalid, and he is henceforth to that communion nothing more than a publican and a heathen.

Such the Reformers became to the communion of Rome. All of their rights,

powers and privileges of ordination were abrogated in their excommunication. "Illustrations of this principle," says the Rev. R. J. Cooke, D. D. (*The Historic Episcopate*, p. 112), "may be found in every age of the Church, the Arian, Eutychian and Donatist Bishops were all validly consecrated, but when they rebelled against the authority which commissioned them and gave them jurisdiction, all their acts were declared null and void. They were no longer in the line of succession and could not transmit what they did not possess." In like manner continues our learned author, "When the founders of the English Church were deposed and excommunicated by the Church of Rome, of which they were originally ministers, all sacerdotal power and ecclesiastical authority of every character was drawn from them by the same power that first conferred it, and therefore, as a necessary consequence, the transmission of that power or authority and the continuity of the succession were *de facto* impossible."

Moreover, it must be remembered that the Established Church regards the Roman Church as the true Church; its ordinations



valid and its acts binding. On this theory therefore, the excommunication was valid and stands in full force against them until this day; having been recorded in heaven, and ratified by Christ as his own act, through the Pope's Anathema, he being Christ's vicegerent on earth. (?) This being true, Anglicans cannot by any logical process of reasoning lay claim to a tactual relation with the Roman Church.

The link was broken under Henry VIII., and they were cut off by Pope Paul III., in 1538 and left to the uncovenanted mercies of God.

**MATTHEW PARKER'S CON-  
SECRATION SCHISMATIC.**

Granting still for the sake of argument, that the Roman Catholic Church is the possessor of the mystical succession, Anglicans cannot claim to be its legitimate recipients, from the fact Matthew Parker's consecration, the corner stone upon which all Anglican orders rest, was not canonical, but schismatic. In other words, it was not according to the rules and by the authority of the Roman Catholic Church, nor any one who had ecclesiastic jurisdiction in the premises, but by the express or-

der and authority of Queen Elizabeth growing out of a political exigency.

King Henry VIII., as we have seen, who was but a layman in the Church—and an impious one at that—proclaimed himself the head of the Church of England, by which act he cut off all ecclesiastical relation with Rome, thus necessitating a change of the constitution of the Church in its entirety, and making it the helpless child of the State. This assumption of ecclesiastical power investing all authority in ecclesiastical matters in the reigning sovereign, was confirmed by an act of Parliament in 1534.

This supremacy act declared “That the King, our sovereign lord, his heirs and successors, kings of this realm, shall be the supreme head in earth, of the Church of England called the *Angelicana Ecclesia*.” (Fisher, *History of the Reformation*, p. 32.) By this act, the sovereign was given the power to commission men to preach, or to forbid the same; to appoint Bishops to Sees, or unbishop them at his pleasure. All disciplinary and ecclesiastical authority was derived from the throne.

From the reign of Henry VIII, to Queen Mary, the Church was Anglo-Catholic, that is to say, it was part Protestant and part Roman Catholic, each element in the Church struggling incessantly for supremacy. This lasted for a quarter of a century, when Elizabeth, the daughter of Henry VIII, and Ann Boleyn came to the throne. This gifted woman being a Protestant at heart and imbued with the spirit of progress, at once threw the weight of her influence toward the cause of the Reformation. Protestantism received an impetus, the constitutional enactment to which I have already referred, which gave Henry VIII, and Edward VI, ecclesiastical supremacy in all matters of Church discipline, was renewed under Elizabeth and remained statutory in England until this day.

The following is the text of the act of supremacy renewed under Elizabeth: "Such jurisdictions, privileges, superiorities, and pre-eminences, spiritual and ecclesiastical, as by any spiritual or ecclesiastical power or authority have heretofore been or may lawfully be, exercised or used for the visitation of the ecclesiastical state and persons,

and for reformation, order and correction of the same, and of all manner of errors, heresies, schisms, abuses, offenses, contempts and enormities, shall forever, by the authority of the present Parliament be united and annexed to the imperial crown of the realm." (Annals, p. 67.)

By this supremacy act, it will be seen that all spiritual jurisdiction was invested in the crown. The ministers of the Gospel were dependent upon a call from the throne of England and not from God; they became mere court officials servants of the crown; they were not God-called and God-sent, but state-called and commissioned.

"The act of supremacy," says Dr. Cook (*The Historic Episcopate*, p. 29), "Also provided that all persons holding office under the crown civil, military or ecclesiastical, should take an oath acknowledging the royal supremacy." By this requirement, every bond between the Roman Church and the Reform Church was broken. The hierarchy which Anglicans affirm had undoubted successions, was destroyed. In the whole kingdom there were twenty-four Episcopal and two arch-episcopal Sees. "The Sees of nine

Bishops and one Archbishop were vacant. In July, 1559, the remaining bishops and Archbishops were summoned by the lords of Councils and ordered to take the oath; but, with the exception of Kitchin, Bishop of Llandaff, they all refused, and by the end of September they were all deprived of their Sees, by the High Court of Commission. In this manner, the Roman Sees were emptied of their Bishops—a mode quite as legal as that by which the bishops of Edward VI had been deprived in the preceding reign—and there now remained in all England no bishop, except Kitchin, who might lawfully exercise the functions of his office or who could with any assurance transmit the succession.” (Ib.) The refusal of the Roman Bishops to acknowledge allegiance to the crown of England, and the filling of the vacancy of the Arch Episcopal See of Canterbury, the most important in all England, led to the issuance of a mandate by her royal Highness, September 9, 1559, to Tonstal of Durham, Bourne of Bath, and Wells, Poole of Petersborough, and Kitchin of Llandaff, and to Doctors of Divinity, Barlow and Scorey, commanding them in the name of

her sovereignty, to consecrate Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury. The Roman Bishops refused to adhere to the Queen's mandate; their refusal was based on a two-fold objection. They neither recognized Barlow and Scory as proper consecrators, nor the authority of the Queen in matters ecclesiastical. Elizabeth and the reformers were seriously embarrassed as the state papers of that epoch-making period plainly show, at their failure to have the first Episcopal consecration under the new regime performed by regular and properly constituted clergymen, having jurisdiction in such matters. By the supplying clause however, in the act of supremacy, the Queen was invested with the right, as the supreme head, of the Church of England, to enter the spiritual realm, and to supply whatever was wanting in spiritual or ecclesiastical power to any person or persons "for the visitation of ecclesiastical state and persons and for reform."

In accordance with this supplying clause in the act of supremacy, Elizabeth issued a second mandate, December 6, 1559, which reads, "Elizabeth, by the grace of God, of



England, of France and Ireland, Queen, Defender of the Faith, etc., to the Reverend Fathers in Christ, Anthony, Bishop of Llandaff, William Barlow, sometime Bishop of Bath, now elect of Chichester, John Scory, sometime Bishop of Chichester, now elect of Hereford, Miles Coverdale, sometime Bishop of Exeter, John, Suffragan of Bedford, John, Suffragan of Thetford, John Bale, Bishop of Ossory, (commanding them to consecrate Matthew Parker, Archbishop of Canterbury)—according to the form of the statutes in this behalf set forth and provided; supplying, nevertheless, by our supreme royal authority of our mere motion and certain knowledge whatever—(either in the thing to be done by you pursuant to our aforesaid mandate, or in you or any of you, your condition, state or power for the performance of the premises)—may or shall be wanting of those things which, either by the statutes of this realm or by the ecclesiastical laws are required, or are necessary on this behalf, the state of the times and the exigency of affairs rendering it necessary.”

In compliance with this royal mandate, on December 17, 1559, in the chapel at Llan-

daff House, Matthew Parker was consecrated Archbishop of Canterbury. Now it will be seen by the foregoing, that Matthew Parker's consecration was by no means canonical, and could not convey the succession to the Church of England had there ever existed such a thing in the Roman Catholic Church to transmit—from the fact his consecration was ordered by no ecclesiastical body and performed by no one who had spiritual jurisdiction in the premises.

The two absolute and essential requirements, acknowledged so by all successionists, to convey a valid succession, were wanting, even Kitchin, the only Bishop left in all England withholding his hands. In the light of these facts, what was Matthew Parker's consecration but a schismatic consecration? And if schismatic, then according to the theory of Romanists and Anglicans themselves, it was uncanonical, and if uncanonical, then invalid, and if invalid, then void of the so-called Apostolic Succession.

The truth is, the Anglican hierarchy originated in civil power. "It drew its life" as Froude says, "from Elizabeth's Throne." And how it was ever possible for the succes-

sion to have come down to Anglicans through this civil medium, is beyond the power of our ability to comprehend.

If it be true, with Dr. McGee (*Apostolic Organism*, p. 76), we are disposed to say "With those who fancy that they can secure an Apostolic Succession transmitted through a political line, we could not dispute, and readily recognize that much Christian piety has proceeded through this line in spite of its secular character; but for ourselves, we have no use for a chain of Apostolic Succession which is hung on a political hook driven into the wall by such a man as Henry VIII."

THE CLAIM TO "THE HISTORIC EPISCOPATE,"  
AN AFTERTHOUGHT.

If anything is clear in studying the motives and purpose of the reformers in breaking faith with Rome, and organizing the Established Church, it was that they might have a Church free from the blighting and corrupting influence of sacerdotalism. It is true they took advantage of the rupture between Henry VIII and Pope Clement VII, to bring about this desired end, and were compelled thereby to countenance many of the King's popish the-

ories, who was still a Roman Catholic in religion. And while they were compelled also to adopt his unscriptural civic theory of church government for the sake of having the support of the throne against Romanism, in their hearts and inner conscience, they rejected the priesthood and all of its vestments, which carried with it the rejection of the old doctrine of Apostolic Succession. All of the priestly vestments, the cap, gown, surplice, crucifix, etc., the badges of popery were discarded as things indifferent. Rejecting the doctrinal accretion of centuries, the mass and priesthood, and with it all the imaginary mystical power conferred in ordination, and without which according to the teaching of Romanists, and the present teaching of Anglicans, themselves, there can be no valid ordination; and going back to the primeval truth, the pure Word of God, they sought to establish a Church on scriptural principles with primitive apostolic simplicity.

The truth is, the founders of Anglicanism were as bitterly opposed to the so-called doctrine of Apostolic Succession, as its latter day adherents are its zealous advocates. Cranmer, the Father of Anglican theology,

and who more than any other man in all England, gave direction to the spirit of reform, and the polity of the Established Church, did not so much as hint at succession in his forty-two Articles of Religions. And these, it is admitted is the basis upon which all Anglican theology is built. He denied that there were three orders in the Christian ministry, and that Episcopal ordination was considered essential to valid ministerial functions.

He maintained that his ecclesiastical power as Bishop, was inherent only in the throne, and when brought to the stake with other denunciators of Romanism, said, "as for the Pope, I denounce him as Christ's enemy and Anti-Christ with all his false doctrines." (Beacon Lights of History, Vol. III, p. 281.) Bishop Jewel, whose Apology of the Church of England, and his no less famous work, the "Defence of the Apology," which were regarded so valuable that they were ordered chained in the Cathedrals so that they might be read by the populace, and who was regarded the mouthpiece of the reformers, attacked with learning and vigor the claims of the Roman Church to succes-



sion. And maintaining himself strong in the righteousness of his argument, declared that the Established Church depended not on "the validity of the orders of those, who having been ordained in the Roman Church, and became the founder of the Church of England."

For says he, "If none of those ministers 'nor of us,' were left alive, yet the Church of England would not flee to Louvian for Roman orders, for the Church would have power to institute its own orders, as, Tertulian saith, 'And we, being laymen, are we not priests?'" (Defence of Apology.) Bishop Pilkington in his Confutation, after chronicling a list of wicked popes, with their wretched abominations, exclaimed "This is the godly succession \* \* \* \* these be the successors and fathers \* \* \* \* God defend all good folks from all such doings." Bishop Whittaker in writing against the Romanists said, "Faith is, as it were, the soul of the succession, which faith being wanting, the naked succession of persons, is like a dead carcass without a soul." The learned Dr. Fulke, in his controversy with a Roman, sarcastically retorted; "Again, with



all our hearts we defy, detest and spit at your stinking greasy anti-Christian orders." Thus the Reformers and founders of the Established Church of England, not only disclaimed heirship to the mystical succession, but denounced and derided it in the most vehement language as a mere figment of the fancy, belonging only to popedom.

How the latter day Anglican adherents can with any show of seriousness preach the dogma, that the doctrine of "The Historic Episcopate," as now held by the Established Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church, were held by the Anglican father, is quite difficult for any one who has any regard for truthfulness of history to understand.

The principles underlying the reformation, the theory of church government as established by them, together with the teaching and practices of the fathers of Anglicanism, all stand to prove, that the doctrine of Apostolic Succession was undreamed of at first. What then, how came it? It was simply an afterthought, the child of exigency. "The first traces of the doctrine" says Hallam, an English historian, "are found

about the end of the Elizabethan reign." But why at this particular period? Namely, for the reason, that at this time, the question of Church polity was forced upon the Church by the Puritans, backed by the powerful Presbyterian sentiment of the Reformed Churches of the continent. In the Established Church, from its incipency, there were two elements, conservatives and radicals. The conservatives were that class who, while they did not countenance many things in the new regime, were willing to make the best of present conditions in hope of a gradual reformation. The radicals on the other hand, known as the Puritans, were persistent in their demands, that the Established Church should be rid of the last vestige of popedom.

The controversy at first, says Dr. Fisher (*History of Ref.*, p. 342), "had respect to the use of the vestments, especially the caps and surplice, and extended to other peculiarities of the ritual. The ground of the Puritan objection was that these things were identified in the popular mind with papal notions; with a particular priesthood, they were badges of popery, and for this reason

should be discarded." Bishop Jewel, one of the brightest stars in the galaxy of reformers in writing to Peter Martyr said, "Now that the full light of the Gospel has shone forth, the very vestiges of error must, as far as possible be removed together with the rubbish, and as the saying is, with the very dust." (April 28, 1559.)

By the end of the Elizabethan reign, the the battle between the Puritans and Anglicans was fierce. The eloquent Hooper and Ridley, the brilliant Jewel and Cartwright, were irresistible in their demands for religious liberty of conscience, and for simplicity of worship. Cartwright assailed the hierarchy, regarding Presbyterian orders only as scriptural and lawful.

It was at this time when the Puritan sentiment seemed destined, not only to shake the whole hierarchal system, but the throne of England itself; that Bancroft, the bitter opponent of Puritanism, came to the rescue of the Established Church with his *Jure divino* doctrine. He, for the first time in the history of the Established Church which had had an existence of more than half a century, asserted the divine right of the

Episcopacy. His learning and well known ability as a controversialist, won for him a continental hearing, and the favor of Elizabeth and also that of James I, her successor.

The political condition of England was ripe for the reception of such a dogma. Internal dissensions together with the threatening attitude of Rome, whose Spanish Armada signified only too well her intention, all conspired to make this dogma, which promised so much as a unifier of the ecclesiastical forces of England, (which after all was its political strength), the cardinal doctrine of the Church.

Hence on the death of Whitgift, Bancroft was appointed by James I, Archbishop of Canterbury. This appointment carried with it the approval of the doctrine of Apostolic Succession which had so long served as the bulwark of papal power. The old Roman dogma had now the approval of "the Head of the Church of England" "and it became" says Dr. Blackburn, "heresy to deny the doctrine," and so Bancroft passed into history "the father of Anglican High Churchism." (History of the Christian Church, Blackburn, p. 525.)

Now if these facts be true, and we assert they are upon the authority of the best English historians and the ablest continental writers, then the claim to the "Historic Episcopate" as now held by the High Churchmen is purely an afterthought; an arrogant assumption and a perversion of history. The fathers of Anglicanism had no more idea of founding a Church on the doctrine of Apostolic Succession, than the Quakers have of adopting High Churchism. The burden of their hearts and the effort for which they sacrificed their lives was that they might have a Church free from ritual and sacerdotalism. And yet High Churchmen would have us believe that the Anglicanism of today is fundamentally the same in polity and doctrine, as that instituted by the godly reformers. Using the language of Dr. Cook, "As well might Roman Catholic writers affirm the Roman Church of the present with its gorgeous ritual, intricate ceremonies, doctrines of masses and indulgencies, infallibility, mariolatry and hunger for imperialism, to be the same Church in doctrine, worship and ceremony, with that company of believers which gathered in the tenement houses on



the banks of the Tiber to hear the Epistle of St. Paul to the Romans."

The logical conclusion to which this brief historic survey leads us, is, that if there ever existed or exists now such a thing in the Roman Catholic Church as Apostolic Succession,—a thing which we deny—the Anglican Church, its Ishmæel child, is not its possessor. The illegitimacy of its birth, the abrogating power of excommunication, together with the most avowed denunciations and denials of it to any claim to the dogma of Succession, upon the part of the reformers and founders of the Established Church of England; to say nothing of Edward's Ordinal used from 1549 to 1662,—a period of one hundred and thirteen years, in which the mystical transmittible doctrine was not known,—and moreover to say nothing of the recognition of Presbyterian order as valid by the Established Church until the change in the Edward's Ordinal in 1662, is absolute proof we say, that the Established Church of England and the Protestant Episcopal Church, its offshoot, never did and does not now possess the mysterious papal privilege. (?) In consequence of which Angli-



canism possesses nothing in her mystical hierarchy touching the validity of orders and office, which is not the lawful heritage of an evangelical ministry.

We have now passed over the pages of fifteen hundred years of sacred history, and we have without prejudice, carefully and technically studied the same, and the conclusion to which our investigation leads us is, there never has been in the Christian Church, any succession, other than the succession of Apostolic faith and doctrine. And the only warrant and seal of a valid ministry, is a direct and divine call from on high.



## CHAPTER VIII.

### THE INSTITUTION OF OUR MINISTRY, OR THE ORDINATION OF BISHOP ALLEN.

Is our ministry a valid one? Does it possess all of the divine elements and powers which properly belong to the scripturally constituted ministry? In a word, is our denominational Church a part of the true Church of God; against which Christ said the gates of hell should not prevail? The Church, as such needs no defense at my hands. Its phenomenal success in the past, the great and good men who tread her courts, the sanctified thousands who kneel at her communion, and the hundreds of thousands who rejoice in the grace of God vouchsafed to them through her evangelical ministry, stand in proof of its validity, and of the divine approval of the Most High.

But while this is true, "There is," as Bishop Turner says, "a historic prestige that mankind will ordinarily look for about a Christian Church or denomination." And it is for

the purpose of setting forth this "historic prestige" and thus arming the student with truth that he may be always ready to give an intelligent answer to him that asketh, as to the origin, orders and office of our ministry; that we here postulate certain organic Church principles inherent in every true Christian organism.

The Church of God is composed of two general divisions: the ministry and the laity. The Church is not only a "congregation of faithful men," but a "congregation of faithful men in which the pure word of God is preached, and the sacraments duly administered," and to this end it must *set apart a divinely called ministry*. And, mark you, we say it must set apart a divinely called ministry, for the ministry must not only have the Divine Call, but have the authorization of the Church, before one can be accounted an accredited minister of the Gospel. The work of the ministry is initially between Christ and the minister; but ordination is between the Church and the minister, and until it recognizes the "Divine Call," and places its ordinal seal thereon, the "called" cannot be said to be duly

qualified. This interdependence of ministerial and lay elements to a valid Church organism is clearly set forth in the organic acts of the apostles.

In Acts 14: 23, we read, "And when they had ordained them elders in every church, and had prayed with fasting, they commended them to the Lord, on whom they believed." That these ordinations took place consonant with the organization of the believers into societies they had won through preaching, is evident from the language of the 21st and 22nd verses of this same chapter. (See also Tit. 1: 5.)

But all of this presupposes a "Divine Call"—in other words an inward impression and conviction by the Holy Ghost, of the duty of preaching the Gospel and an irresistible impulse thereto. A "Divine Call," is an essential prerequisite to a valid ministry. Some there have been who have dared to enter the ministry as one who would choose a profession, and by some sort of an ecclesiastical arrangement, have assayed to call themselves ministers of Christ. But "Though hands of Bishops, Archbishops and Popes may have been imposed suffi-

cient in number to thatch a cathedral," such persons without a direct and "Divine Call" from on high, were assuredly not members of Christ's Holy Priesthood.

In Heb. 5: 4, it is said, "no man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is called of God, as was Aaron." And Paul declared under the conviction that a dispensation of the Gospel was committed unto him, that "necessity is laid upon me; yea, woe is unto me, if I preach not the Gospel!" (1 Cor. 9: 16.)

But while the fact of the call makes it imperative upon the "called" to preach the Gospel, the fact of necessitated authorization makes it his duty only upon the condition that the Church, in recognizing the proper "gifts, graces and usefulness," gives by some public authoritative declaration, its ordinal approbation. If it be said that this makes the Church the ordainer, then we have reached our point. For all ecclesiastical power is invested in the Church and it alone gives validity to the "call." Says Dr. McGee (*Apostolic Organism*, p. 146), "The beginning of ecclesiastical power, is illustrated by the first ecclesiastical meeting

after the Ascension of Christ, as recorded in Acts 1: 15, 16, in which the whole "hundred and twenty," probably the entire number of the disciples of Christ in and about Jerusalem participated. Thus, also, in the election of the seven (Acts. 6: 1-7), the aggregate body assembled, the disciples and the apostles both acting their part. And again the procedure recorded in Acts 13: 1-3 while not describing, perhaps an ordination in the common usage of the word, yet with the foregoing, indicates how authority is derived from the body of believers.

Hence, it is the Church that ordains; however while through its constituted method, whether aggregated or delegated, the Church may designate upon whom it will confer authority to act in a ministerial capacity, and may act legislatively and judicially, yet it cannot conveniently, indeed not possibly act executively; therefore it must have a constituted agent, representative, or executive officer, who not by inherent prerogatives, but by the authority of the Church, shall perform the interesting, significant and important ordination act for it.



It is the Church that ordains. "Thus from the Scriptures it seems clear that the constituting power of the ministry is inherent in the *Church*—The Church recognizing the 'Divine Call' evidenced in 'gifts, graces and usefulness,'" as originating with the Lord Jesus himself; licenses or ordains the "Called of God" and sends him forth an accredited and duly qualified minister of the Gospel all in the name of the Great Head of the Church, who is the source of all power and authority in his Kingdom.

Pursuant to this Apostolic procedure herein outlined, the ecclesiastical compact, known as the African Methodist Episcopal Church in General Council Assembled, proceeded to constitute a ministry by electing and ordaining Richard Allen, Bishop.

In the "Introductory" of the A. M. E. Discipline, it is said, "The preachers and members of our Church having become a distinct body of people, by reason of separation from our brethren of the Methodist Episcopal Church, found it necessary at their first General Conference in April, 1816, to elect one from their own body, who was adequate to be set apart in holy orders to

superintend the connection that was formed. The Rev. Richard Allen, being seventeen years an ordained preacher by the Rev. Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was unanimously elected to fill that office; and on the eleventh day of April, 1816, the Rev. Richard Allen, was solemnly set apart for the Episcopal office, by prayer and the imposition of the hands of five regular ordained ministers, one of whom, Absalom Jones, was a priest in the Protestant Episcopal Church, who was then and continued in good standing under the Diocese of the Right Rev. Bishop White, of Pennsylvania, at which time the General Conference, in Philadelphia, did unanimously receive the said Richard Allen, as their Bishop, being fully satisfied with the validity of his Episcopal ordination."

THE VALIDITY OF  
THE ACT.

The question now arises: "Was this a valid ordination?" We answer on the basis of the scriptural principles, already herein outlined, it was perfectly legitimate and valid; all of the constitutional prerequisites or Apostolic requirements being present in both the ordained and ordainer.

*First: As to the qualification of the ordained.*

(a) Rev. Richard Allen filled up the measure of the scriptural requirements. (I. Tim. 3:1-8; Titus 1:6-8.) He was a good, wise and faithful Christian man.

(b) He was "divinely called." As an evidence of which, his ordination as Deacon by Bishop Asbury, seventeen years previous, stands in proof.

(c) He was elected. The record of these "organic acts" informs us that, "The Rev. Richard Allen being seventeen years an ordained preacher by the Rev. Bishop Asbury, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, was unanimously elected to fill that office" (Bishopric); and this, "on the eleventh day of April, 1816." The strength of all Moderate Episcopacy is "election." This conceded with the foregoing qualifications, the validity of the ordinal act, so far as Richard Allen, personally, was concerned, is beyond question.

*Secondly: As to the qualification of the ordainer—The Church.*

(a) As to the power inherent. It was as we have already observed, a properly organ-

ized association of Christian believers into a covenanted compact, on purely scriptural principles—a Church with primary and absolute ecclesiastical power to ordain or set apart a ministry, either collectively or by delegated authority. As a Church, the power of ordination was inherent.

Writing to Cyprian, Farmilian says (See Ante-Nicean Library, American Edition, p. 392), "All power and grace, are established in the Church, where the Elders preside, who possess the power both of baptizing and of imposition of hands and of ordaining." And Cyprian (Ib., p. 371) says, "The Bishop shall be chosen in the presence of the people, who have most fully known the life of each one as respects his habitual conduct. And this also we see was done by you in the ordination of our colleague Sabinus, so that by the suffrage of the whole brotherhood, and by the sentence of the bishops who had assembled in their presence and who had written letters to you concerning him, the episcopate was conferred upon him."

Augustine, held that the power of the keys were inherent in the Church, that is, the keys of ordination, and the keys of jurisdiction.

And with him all ancient authorities agree. In the *British Quarterly Review* (Jan., 1877), an article on the "Priesthood in the light of the New Testament," appeared; in which the learned writer quotes the [views of an eminent authority which we here make our own. He remarked that, "Totatus," Bishop of Avila in his great commentary, says, "For the power of a prelate does not take its origin from itself, but from the church by means of the election it makes of him. The church that chose him, gave him that jurisdiction; it received it from nobody after its having once received it from Jesus Christ. The church has the keys originally and virtually, and whenever she gives them to a prelate, she does not give them to him after the manner that she has them, to wit: originally and virtually, but she gives them to him only as to use." Thus, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in strict conformity to Apostolic principles, and the practice of the Christian Church from earliest historic times, out of itself, quickened by the Holy Ghost, called Richard Allen, who belonged to it vitally; and who was likewise inwardly quickened by the

Holy Spirit, to its ministry, and this it did on the authority of the power inherent in itself, received originally and immediately from Christ as an organic member of His mystical body.

(b) *As to the Agencies employed.* Were the ordainers of Richard Allen proper persons to perform the ordinal act? In other words, had they the proper ecclesiastical qualification and authority? That they were duly qualified, is evident.

They were duly qualified in that they were clothed with ministerial authority to act for and in behalf of the Church—the associated compact—and the power of ordination being inherent in the Church by reason of its apostolicity, it had the power to confer upon whom it would the authority to perform the Ordination Act, just as in the case of the Church at Antioch when the “Holy Ghost” said, “Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them.”

The Church acted through Simeon, Lucius and Manaen, who, though they were not apostles acted ministerially for the Church, the Church conferring upon them the power to



act representatively for it. And here we are free to say, had none of the ordainers of Richard Allen been in order, his ordination would have been just as valid as though he had been ordained by the Archbishop of Canterbury, or the Pope of Rome. For they were duly qualified, not because of any particular ministerial orders the ordainers may have possessed, but because of the fact that they were chosen representatively and clothed with ministerial authority to act for and in behalf of the Church collectively. Their act was valid because they acted representatively *for the Church*.

(c) *As to the element of necessity.* The doctrine of genuine necessity has long been regarded a valid plea in justification of ordination by a Presbyter or even for the re-institution of a ministry *de novo*. This belief is supported by the practice of the Primitive Church.

Jerome, who was perfectly versed in the traditions and customs of the early Church, lays it down as a historic fact, that though there were many Episcopates in the Alexandrian Church, "the presbyters always called one by themselves, and placed in a higher

rank, bishop, just as an army may constitute its general, or deacons may elect one of themselves whom they know to be diligent, and call him Archdeacon." (I. Epistle to Evagrius.)

Augustine says, "And it is base to call a pronotary, or archdeacon, a judge, for in Alexandria, and through the whole of Egypt the presbyter consecrates if the bishop is absent." (Questions 191.) And to this testimony Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, Eusebius, Cyprian, Firmilian, Hilary the Deacon, Chrysostom and Theodoret, with many other patristic writers all assent. In addition to this array of primitive testimonies in support of the doctrine of necessity, the history of the Reformed Churches of Denmark, and of Sweden, of the Church of England, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and of the Protestant Episcopal Church, and in fact, of the entire spirit and sweep of Protestantism stand in evidence. The learned Bishop Burnett in his exposition on the XXIII Article of Religion of the Church of England says, "Finally, if a company of Christians find the public worship of God where they live to be so defiled that

they cannot with a good conscience join in it, and if they do not know of any place to which they can conveniently go where they may worship God purely and in a regular way—if, I say, such a body, finding some that have been ordained, though to the lower functions, should submit itself entirely to their conduct, or, finding none of those should by common consent desire some of their own number to minister to them in holy things, and should upon that beginning grow up to a regulated constitution, though we are very sure that this is quite out of all rule, and could not be done without a very great sin, unless the necessity were great and apparent, yet if the necessity is real and not feigned, this is not condemned or annulled by the Article; for when this grows to a constitution, and when it was begun by the consent of a body who are supposed to have an authority in such an extraordinary case, whatever some hotter spirits have thought of this since that time, yet we are very sure that not only those who penned the Articles, but the body of this Church for above half an age after, did, notwithstanding these irregularities, acknowledge the

foreign Churches so constituted to be true Churches as to all the essentials of a Church."

Bishop Hooker, an eminent authority on Ecclesiastical Order in this same Church, said, "There may be sometimes very just and sufficient reasons to allow ordination without a bishop. *The whole church visible being the true* original subject of all power, it hath not ordinarily allowed any other than bishops alone to ordain. Howbeit, as the ordinary cause is ordinary in all things to be observed, so it may be, in some cases, not unnecessary that we decline from the ordinary ways.

Men may be extraordinarily, yet allowably in two ways, admitted into spiritual functions in the Church. One is when God himself doth of himself raise up a way; *another, when the exigency of* necessity doth constrain to leave the usual ways of the Church, \* \* \* \* \* when the Church must needs have some ordained, and neither hath nor can have possible a bishop to ordain; in case of such necessity the ordinary institution of God hath given oftentimes, and may give, place." (Eccl. Polity, Book VIII, chap. XIX.)

In the Rev. John Wesley's letter to the Christmas Conference of 1784, setting forth the grounds of necessity for the ordination of Dr. Coke, and through him the institution of a ministry to supply "these poor sheep in the Wilderness," he says: "Lord King's account of the primitive Church convinced me many years ago that bishops and presbyters are the same order and have consequently the same right to ordain. For many years I have been importuned, from time to time, to exercise this right by ordaining part of our traveling preachers. But I have still refused, not only for peace's sake, but because I was determined as little as possible to violate the established order of the national Church to which I belong. But the case is widely different between England and North America. Here there are bishops who have a legal jurisdiction. In America there are none, neither any parish minister; so that for some hundreds of miles together, there are none either to baptize or to administer the Lord's Supper. Here, therefore, my scruples are at an end, and I conceive myself at full liberty, as I violate no order and invade no man's right by appointing



and sending laborers into the harvest.”

But for fear I burden the reader with quotations, I forbear. Sufficient testimony is here adduced to prove the power of the Church to ordain by the hands of a Presbyter, or to reconstitute a ministry where *genuine necessity* makes this duty clear.

The question now arises, was the ordinal act of the A. M. E. Church the logical result of an exigency? In other words, was the ordination of Richard Allen justified on the principle of genuine necessity? We answer, yes. The Reformed Churches of Denmark and Sweden, the Established Church of England, the Methodist Episcopal Church, and the Protestant Episcopal Church, never had more justifiable grounds for breaking faith with their old communions than did the members of color of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816. (1) The spirit of race prejudice engendered by color and condition of servitude, had made them unwelcome members in the Methodist communion. To quote from the Historic Preface, A. M. E. Book of Discipline, it is affirmed that, “In 1787, the colored people belonging to the Methodist Society in Phila-



delphia, convened together, in order to take under consideration the evils, under which they labored, arising from the unkind treatment of their white brethren, who considered them a nuisance in the house of worship; and even pulled them off their knees while in the act of prayer, and ordered them to the backseats. *For these and various other acts of unchristian conduct, they considered it their duty to devise a plan in order to build a house of their own, to worship God under their own vine and fig tree.*" That their action was perfectly justifiable on the grounds of unacceptability and unchristian discrimination herein affirmed, must be apparent to all who believe in "*Unity and Fellowship*" as the basis principles of Church life and organic union.

This cardinal principle of Christian brotherhood, was discarded by their white brethren and they were unceremoniously given to understand that they were not wanted. In consequence of which, "they considered it their *duty* to devise a plan in order to build a house of their own to worship God under their own vine and fig tree."

It was a case of *necessity* absolute and apparent.

(2) They were neglected and often without pastoral care, and the means of grace. If the Hellenistic Christian of Apostolic times were justified in their complaint of the neglect of their widows "in the daily ministration;" (Acts 6: 1) to the extent that the Deaconate, a new order in the Christian ministry was instituted to supply that want; and if John Wesley the illustrious founder of Methodism was justified in instituting a ministry through the ordination of Dr. Coke, for his poor sheep in the wilderness, neglected and without the means of grace; then this body of Christians which had already become an *organic compact*, were equally justified in the institution of a ministry through the ordination of Richard Allen, on the same principle aforestated: to feed and administer to this particular spiritually destituted and neglected African flock. We say equally justified from the fact that the white Elders who had their spiritual oversight, had for quite thirty years seriously neglected them, and this neglect and indifference to their spiritual welfare had

grown with the growing race prejudice of the times until finally they were neglected all together.

If it be said that the white Elders did not from sheer indifference neglect them, but because of their refusal to reward the servant for his hire, did so, then we answer that our argument still holds good; for their refusal to pay certain stipulated salaries demanded by the trustees of St. George's Church and the Academy, was based upon the same principle of neglect. Richard Allen in his life, experience, etc., says, "The elder supplied us, preaching five times in a year, for two hundred dollars. Finding that they supplied us so seldom, the trustees of Bethel Church passed a resolution that they would pay but one hundred dollars a year as the elder only preached five times in a year for us: they called for the money; we paid him twenty-five dollars a quarter, but he being dissatisfied returned the money and would not have it unless we paid him fifty dollars. The trustees concluded it was enough for five sermons and said they would pay no more. The elder of St. George's was determined to preach for us no more, unless we gave him

two hundred dollars, and we were left alone for upwards of one year." Again it is said, "at length the preachers and stewards belonging to the Academy proposed serving us on the same terms that we offered to the St. George's preacher, and they preached for us better than twelve months, and then demanded \$150.00 per year: this not being complied with, they declined preaching for us, and we were once more left to ourselves; an edict was passed by the elders, that if any local preacher should serve us, he should be expelled from the connection. John Emory, then elder of the Academy, published a circular letter, in which we were disowned by the Methodist." And in this, I submit it. The doctrine of necessity was never more apparent; ostracized, maltreated, neglected, and finally disowned, their duty was clear. The institution of a ministry to secure unto themselves the means of grace was the only way opened to them. It was the voice of *necessity*. In answer to which, the Church set apart one of their members to minister in holy things.

Thus the A. M. E. Church standing upon the impregnable authority of Apostolic pre-

edents and principles not only felt itself duly qualified, but likewise justified in instituting a ministry by prayer, election and holy hands. And such is its warrant of Ecclesiastical authority today.



## CHAPTER IX.

### AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPACY.

By Episcopacy is meant the government of Bishops in the Church. It exists in two cardinal forms, with sundry subordinate modifications, and may be classified under the following general heads: (1) Diocesan Episcopacy, and (2) Itinerant Episcopacy. By Diocesan Episcopacy is meant that form of Church government known in the Protestant Episcopal Church in America, the Established Church of England, and the Roman Catholic Church. In these Churches, each Bishop is in charge of a certain number of churches, or a specified territory called a Diocese.

The advocates of this form of Church polity, claim that "God has established an order of men as ministers of his Church, who have exclusive right to the ministerial functions of that Church, who perpetuate, and who are arranged in three orders by divine appointment, the supreme power within a



given jurisdiction being vested in one man, who, when once raised to his Episcopal prerogatives, becomes invested *by a divine right for life*, with exclusive powers to admit to membership in the Church by the right of confirmation, and creates, and commissions all ministers of the Gospel for the entire circuit of his episcopate." This is, in short, Diocesan Episcopacy.

**ITINERANT  
EPISCOPACY.**

Itinerant Episcopacy is that form of Church government known in Methodism, in which Bishops itinerate and exercise a general and concurrent government over all the preachers and Churches throughout the denominational bounds.

This form of Episcopal government finds its origin in the *third restrictive article* of the Constitution, adopted by the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church in 1808, in the following language, viz.: "They (the General Conference)—shall not change, or alter any part or rule of our government so as to do away with episcopacy, or destroy the plan of our itinerant general superintendency." While it is true that the embryo idea of an Itinerant Epis-

copacy had its rise with the birth of American Methodism, in the general superintendency of the work by Messrs. Asbury, Coke, and Rankin, under Mr. Wesley, still it never became a fixture in Methodism until the adoption of the *Restrictive Rules*, by the Delegated General Conference of 1808, which provided for and made inviolable "The plan of our itinerant general superintendency."

Such is the Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

RELATION OF AFRICAN METHODIST  
EPISCOPACY TO EPISCOPAL  
METHODISM.

But what of the  
Episcopacy of the  
African Methodist

Episcopal Church? And what historic relation does it sustain to Episcopal Methodism?

"The roots of the present", it has been said, "lie deep in the past, and nothing in the past is dead to the man who would learn how the present comes to be what it is." It has been further stated, "when we understand how anything *has become* what *it is*, we understand its *history*. Indeed, its history is the process of becoming what *it is* and the record of this process constitutes its recorded history."

“The roots of the present,” of the Episcopacy of the African Methodist Episcopal Church lie deep in the soil of the Third Restrictive Rule of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Upon the organization of the African Methodist Episcopal Church in 1816, eight years after the Methodist Episcopal Church adopted its Constitution known as *The Restrictive Rules*, the African Methodist Episcopal Church, adopted for its government, the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church, with the same *Restrictive Rules* unchanged.

By this act *The Restrictive Rules* became to the African Methodist Episcopal Church what they were to the Methodist Episcopal Church—its Constitution. But while the Discipline of the Methodist Episcopal Church with the said Restrictive Rules therein, did become the rule and government of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, it was not binding, as yet, any further than it was the pleasure of the Eldership of the Church, having never been ratified by delegated authority, and was subject to change or annulment at any time.

For fifty-two years, covering the period

from 1816 to 1868, our system of government, including its plan of general superintendency, was in ecclesiastical jeopardy.

During this time, it had passed through the ordeal of thirteen General Conferences, any one of which could have changed or abolished it *ad libitum*. However, the General Conference of 1868, composed of thoughtful and Godly men, many of whom had carefully observed *our plan* of work and its results for more than half a century, and who were fully satisfied with the principles and utility of the system: and being desirous to perpetuate sacredly and inviolably, the doctrine, moral discipline, and government of the Church, and especially to conserve and perpetuate the Episcopacy of the Church, as an Itinerant general superintendency; as through such superintendency the General Conference would be able to execute its rules and regulations, and carry the whole system, of our Itinerant ministry into complete effect, did in conventional capacity, institute a delegated General Conference, thereby transferring to, and vesting in the then created body, all the power which the whole body of Elders possessed, to make

rules and regulations for the African Methodist Episcopal Church, with certain specified exceptions embraced in the Restrictive Rules.

This epoch-making General Conference of 1868, in order to preserve sacred and inviolate the government of the Fathers, did further by Constitutional enactment ratify the Restrictive Rules of 1808, with slight changes as to numerical position and verbiage, the spirit and genius remaining the same.

And upon this bedrock, known as the Second Restrictive Rule in the book of Discipline of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, in almost the identical language of 1808, the constitutionality of our Episcopacy rests.

But is our Episcopacy truly Itinerant *de facto*, or is it simply a modified form of Diocesan Episcopacy? Does not the localizing of our Bishops serve to subvert the spirit of the Second Restrictive Rule, so as to "do away the general Superintendency?" We answer, no. Our Episcopacy was not born of Diocesan Episcopacy but of Itinerant Episcopacy. Ours' is to all intents and purposes a General Superintendency. The only difference between our Episcopacy and the Episco-



pany of other Episcopal Methodisms, is, in the *plan*. The Episcopacy of the Methodist Episcopal Church is general and has an annual rotation, while that of the African Methodist Church is also general, but has a quadrennial rotation; but so far as concurrent power and authority over the entire Church are concerned, they are inherent in our Episcopacy.

In the book of Discipline, under the head of "Duties of Bishops," Articles 12 and 13, it is said, "He (the Bishop) shall travel at large through his district and visit every circuit and station and oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies in his district." "He shall whenever the officers of any Church call him and necessity requires him, visit any Episcopal District and act alone, in the absence of its Bishop or conjointly with him in all cases in which the interest of the connection demands his service."

Suffice it to say, that the general scope of Episcopal authority, herein vested in the Episcopacy, empowering any one Bishop to exercise his Episcopal functions singly or conjointly in any and all parts of the general



Church, where the interest of the work demands his presence, has from the beginning been a cardinal feature of our government. It is not held, in the judgment of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, that the localizing of her Bishops for a quadrennium tends to subvert the genius of Episcopal Methodism, or to do away with "the general superintendency." Thus the Episcopacy of Methodism, as it was in 1808, with every form of authorization and recognition, with every attribute of authority and responsibility, has been in the past and remains to this good day, the impregnable, Constitutional bulwark of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. And around which the entire structure of our government stands.

**THE DUTIES OF  
BISHOPS.**

The duties of Bishops are to be found embodied in the word "*Superintendent*," and this word is significant and means much in the Polity of Methodism. It is the generic term in all our government, and the special duties prescribed and enjoined in the book of Discipline are subordinate thereto and describe and limit the sphere of its action. Superintendency is the act of su-

perintending; it is care and oversight for the purpose of directing and with authority to direct.

Among the duties enjoined upon a Bishop by the constitution of the Church, and which he may not omit or neglect except at the peril of forfeiting his official standing, are the following: (1) To preside in Conferences; (2) To chose and appoint the Presiding Elders, and only such as are "healthy, vigorous, and well able to preach and stand the hardships of continuous travel;" (3) To fix in conjunction with the Presiding Elders, all of the appointments of the preachers at the Annual Conferences and such too, only as the Church, by her own act may furnish for appointments; (4) To appoint Presidents, principals, and teachers to seminaries and colleges, controlled by the Connection, when requested to do so by the Annual Conference; (5) To appoint agents to labor for embarrassed churches and literary institutions, when requested to do so by the Annual Conference; (6) To decide all questions of law that may arise in an Annual Conference, his decisions subject however to an appeal to the "Court of Triers of Appeals." The

application of the law being with the Annual Conference and from which any aggrieved may appeal to the judicial conference; (7) To change, receive and suspend preachers in the interval of the Annual Conference session, being governed in changing and receiving by the necessity of the case and suspending only as the Discipline may require, that is, after due examination and conviction before a committee of the peers of the accused; (8) To travel at large through his district and oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies; (9) To visit any Episcopal district, when called by the officers of the church, and the necessity is apparent, and act alone, in the absence of its Bishop or conjointly with him in all cases in which the interest of the Connection demands his services; (10) To see that every station, circuit and mission is pastored by a vigorous and acceptable pastor; (11) To remove no preacher without his consent beyond the bounds of his district, until he shall have given him at least a three months' notice, prior to the time appointed for his removal; (12) To accept the transfer of no preacher against whom there is a charge,

till after the Conference shall have full time to examine his character and pass upon the same, without laying himself liable to judicial proceedings, as per Discipline; (13) To give a form of certificate as per discipline, to every member of an Annual Conference, that he shall transfer from one conference to another; (14) To entertain all motions duly made and seconded in all church Conferences and general board meetings, when they do not conflict with positive law; (15) To exercise his Episcopal office only, on the grounds that he travel at large throughout his district; (16) To see that all Conference funds are appropriated according to Discipline; (17) To ordain such as are elected to orders by Conferences, but no others; (18) To see that no woman is ordained to the diaconate or eldership in the African Methodist Episcopal Church; (19) To prepare annually a Year Book of African Methodism, to contain general knowledge and facts of our own and other Methodisms, also, it shall contain a condensed form of resolutions and other matters of interest, such as rulings and decisions of the Bishops on law, as may be set-

tled upon by the House of Bishops, from time to time, for the good of the Church.

These are the duties of the Bishops found in well established usages and in the organic law of the Church. Thus, it is seen that in all this specialization and enumeration of Episcopal duties, the one word is "*Superintendency*." It is the duty of Bishops to oversee or superintend the spiritual and temporal interests of the Church.

Bishops are the watchmen on the walls of our denominational Zion; the guardians of our polity and the custodians of our doctrine. They fill a position which is not only one of great dignity, but also one of mighty responsibilities and onerous duties. To them is committed the care and government of all the churches. It is a great and unique power they hold.

Among all men of earth, few are trusted as the Bishops of the African Methodist Episcopal Church. Few deal with interests of such magnitude, or stand where integrity of character and practical wisdom are so essential. And yet be it said to the credit of our own Bishops and to the Bishops of our common Methodism in general, in the language of



Dr. McGee, "Notwithstanding the high prerogatives of Methodist Bishops, from Coke and Asbury to the end of the list, there has never been one who has dishonored the Church, nor for whom she has had occasion to blush; but by their fidelity, industry, wisdom, courage and piety, in the administration of the vast and evergrowing interest of the Church, they have not only called forth admiration for the genius of her institutions, but has demonstrated hers to be a real Apostolic episcopacy. Errors of administration there doubtless have been, for infallibility is not claimed, as for the popedom by its adherents; nevertheless, such sagacity, disinterestedness, and success have been unequaled in all churchmanship."

And to this eloquent testimonial we may add, to the "Godly judgment;" the self-consecration; the faithfulness; the vigorous leadership of these generals of "the sacramental host;" these Holy sons of Levi; these High Priests of our growing Israel, our world conquering Methodism owes its unbounded success.



## CHAPTER X.

### THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDING ELDERSHIP.

#### THE ORIGIN OF THE OFFICE.

The idea of the Presiding Eldership is found first of all in the office of the *Chorepiscopos*, or “Country bishop,” and dates back to the third century.

The *Chorepiscopi* were “a class” of ministers “between bishops and presbyters” who exercised their office under the direction of the City Bishop. They were required to oversee the work of the Church in the rural districts, the chief Presbyter or Bishop, seeing “The impossibility of careful oversight of all the interests of a large diocese.” (Shaff-Herzog.)

In the *Chorepiscopi* of these early times, the embryo idea of the Office of the Presiding Eldership is to be found, and though not known by that name; it has existed *de facto*, in the Christian Church for the last seventeen centuries.

This office was first introduced into American Methodism in 1784.

Says Dr. John, J. Tigert, "This office is not explicitly recognized in the Discipline of 1784. Yet this is the epoch of its virtual creation. It came with the first ordinations, the first formal provisions for the administration of the Sacraments, and is, therefore, coeval with the organization of the Church. Thomas Ware has already told us how the ordination of sufficient Elders at the Christmas Conference, 'to visit the quarterly meetings, and administer the ordinances,' was the measure 'which gave rise to the office of presiding elder among us.'

'Bishop Soule tells us how this office has been recognized from the beginning as the special deputy and representative of an absent Bishop, and how he stood in the same relation to assistants which the general assistant had formerly occupied. In the appointments of 1785, for the first time, the names of Willis, Ivy, Ellis, Reed, Matson, O'Kelly, Foster, Whatcoat, Boyer, Gill, Vasey, and Chew, some of whom were elected and ordained after the Christmas Conference, are prefixed to groups of Circuits rang-

ing from two to eight in number, while the title Elder is affixed to their names.

“The almost invariable rule in the beginning, was that Elders were assigned to districts, or, rather to groups of Circuits not yet denominated by this name. This was the origin of this office, though the title “presiding elder” does not appear regularly in the minutes until as late as 1797. In the Discipline, it occurs first in 1792.

“The first person to bear this title in the official records of the Church is William McKindree, whose district stands first in the appointments of 1797. Richard Whatcoat’s district is the second. The title also occurs in the journal of the General Conference of 1796.” (Constitutional History of American Episcopal Methodism, p. 213.)

Bishops Coke and Asbury in their notes to the Discipline of 1796, say, “And we believe we can venture to assert, that there never has been an Episcopal Church of any great extent which has not had *ruling* or *presiding elders*, either expressly *by name*, as in the Apostolic Churches, or otherwise *in effect*. On this account it is, that all the modern Episcopal Churches have had their

presiding or ruling elders, under the names of grand vicars, archdeacons, rural deans, etc. The Moravians have Presiding Elders, who are invested with very considerable authority, though, we believe, they are simply termed Elders. And we beg leave to repeat that, we are confident we could, if need were, show that all Episcopal Churches, ancient and modern, of any great extent, have had an order or set of ministers corresponding, more or less to our presiding or ruling elders, all of whom were, more or less, invested with the superintendence of other ministers, \* \* \* \* \* Mr. Wesley informs us in his works, that the whole plan of Methodism was introduced, step by step, by the interference and opening of divine Providence. This was the case in the present instance. When Mr. Wesley drew up a plan of government for our Church in America, he desired that no more Elders be ordained in the first instance than were absolutely necessary, and that the work on the continent should be divided between them, in respect to the duties of their office. The General Conference accordingly elected twelve Elders for the above purposes.

Bishop Asbury and the district (Annual) Conference afterwards found that this order of men was so necessary that they agreed to enlarge the number, and give them *the name* by which they are at present called, (of which, however, there is no trace in the minutes: the Bishop probably acted, and the Conference acquiesced,) and which is perfectly Scriptural though not *the word* used in our translation: and this proceeding afterwards received the approbation of Mr. Wesley. In 1792 the General Conference equally conscious of the necessity of having such an office among us, not only confirmed everything that Bishop Asbury and the District Conferences had done, but also drew up or agreed to the present section for the explanation of the nature and duties of the office. The Conference clearly saw that the Bishop wanted assistants; that it was impossible for one or two Bishops so to superintend the vast work on the continent as to keep everything in order in the intervals of the Conference, without other official men to act under them and assist them." (Notes on the Discipline 1796.)

Thus the office of the Presiding Eldership



like that of the Bishopric, grew into existence as a creature of necessity, or to use the words of Bishop Turner, "It was developed out of necessity."

This office which has been eloquently called "the *right arm* of our episcopacy," has been nominally recognized in the African Methodist Episcopal Book of Discipline from the beginning. But was never made operative until 1868, at which time the General Conference sitting in Washington, D. C., instituted or made effective the Presiding Elder's office in such Annual Conferences as chose to adopt it. It was then and there made optionally operative.

The General Conference sitting at Indianapolis in 1888, observing the benefits of the system, wherein active operation, and seeing the need of a more uniform government, enacted that the law of 1868 be repealed and that the Presiding Elder system be made operative throughout the general Church. (General Conference Minutes 1888, p. 106.) Since this time it has steadily grown in favor with the Church, until today it is regarded an indispensable factor in our ministry.



THE RELATION OF PRESID-  
ING ELDERS TO THE  
EPISCOPACY.

The office of the  
Presiding Elder-  
ship is an adjunct  
to the Episcopacy.

It is, as Stevens has  
said, "The left arm of the churches' discip-  
linary administration."

In 1786 two years after the creation of the  
office of the Presiding Elder in addi-  
tion to the duties enjoined upon said official,  
viz.:

(1) "To administer the sacraments of bap-  
tism, and the Lord's Supper and perform all  
the other rites prescribed by our Liturgy  
Discipline 1785." The following duties were  
added:

(2) "To exercise within his own district,  
during the absence of the Superintendents,  
all the powers vested in them for the govern-  
ment of the Church, provided that he never  
act contrary to an express order of the Su-  
perintendents." (Emory's History of the  
Discipline, p. 125.)

Bishop McKindree says, "The General  
Superintendents are invested with full pow-  
er to superintend the work at large\* \* \* \*.  
But the work extended so rapidly that in a

few years it became impossible for the Bishop to superintend it in person; therefore, Presiding Elders were introduced, as assistant superintendents; and as the Bishops were the only responsible persons for the administration, they were to choose the Presiding Elders, who were authorized to superintend the work in the absence of the Bishops; therefore, the office of a Presiding Elder is not separate and distinct from that of a general Superintendent, but is inseparably connected with a part of it, and included in it. They are deputized by the Bishops who bear the whole responsibility of the administration, as their assistants in the Superintendency.”

This bit of historic legislation together, with Bishop McKindree’s clear and accepted statement on the origin of Presiding Elders, gives us a clear idea as to the relation Presiding Elders sustain to the Episcopacy in the beginning.

They were the deputies of the Bishops, acting with delegated Episcopal Authority. And, “In the absence of the Bishops,” exercising “all the powers vested in *them*

(Bishops) for the government of the Church," Ordination excepted.

This Sub-episcopal relation of Presiding Elders to the Episcopacy ordained in the organic law of the Methodist Episcopal Church in the beginning, has been and *is*, the relation which Presiding Elders sustain to the Episcopacy in all branches of Episcopal Methodism.

They are as Bishop Turner says, "High Ministerial functionaries, charged with weighty responsibilities, \* \* \* Assistant Bishops, or Superintendents, Sub-episcopates." (Methodist Polity, p. 134.)

The relation however which Presiding Elders sustain to the Episcopacy or General Superintendency of African Methodism, is more clearly defined in the following enumeration of duties and restrictions set forth in the A. M. E. Book of Discipline. To wit:

(1) To take charge of all the Elders, Deacons, Preachers, itinerant and local, and the Exhorters in his district.

(2) To travel at large in his district, preside in the District Conference, and all the Quarterly Conferences, assist pastors at Quarterly Meetings, see that the business of the Con-

ference is in strict accord with the Discipline, and preach at least once at each charge quarterly.

(3) To keep a faithful record of the Quarterly Conference minutes, and to give proper directions to all the affairs of the Church.

(4) To give decisions on all questions of law in the District Conference, and the Quarterly Conferences, subject to an appeal to the Annual Conference, the application of the law in all cases to be left to the District Conference and the Quarterly Conference.

(5) To change or remove a preacher in the interval of Annual Conference, after strict investigation, where the interest of a Church demands it, or when a majority of the membership is dissatisfied and the Official Board, in a written petition, requests him to do so; provided he assign said preacher to another field of labor. He may call a committee to investigate or try a case of a pastor under charges.

(6) To employ a preacher who has been rejected by an Annual Conference because of failure to pass examination; provided the Annual Conference grant permission and the

preacher is a man of good moral character; but he shall not employ nor allow to exercise in any Church of his district any preacher under suspension or expulsion, in our own, or other Churches.

(7) To thoroughly acquaint himself with the efficiency and acceptability of the pastors in his district, and endeavor to have satisfactory appointments for all the people.

(8) To see that all moneys collected on Connectional Sabbath—Endowment, Easter, and Children's Day are forwarded to the offices to which they are due, promptly, and shall demand, no part of the collections on those days, as payment of assessment for support.

(9) To cease not to travel without the consent of the Annual Conference, or the Bishop.

(10) To preside over the District Conference in the absence of the Bishop.

Thus it will be seen that no class of Ministers in the Methodist Economy fill a more important position than Presiding Elders.

This office is representative. They represent the Bishop in all of their official acts and utterances.



Objections to this office are often raised both among the ministry and laity of our Church. But these objections usually come either from those who have not examined into the important relations thereof to the whole Economy of the Church and its necessitated place in an Episcopal system, or from those who are prejudiced against an Episcopal form of government.

In view therefore, it may not be out of place to discuss briefly some of the benefits of the system

IT MAINTAINS AN  
EFFICIENT ITINERANCY. One of the peculiar features of Methodism is the Itinerancy of her ministry. Annually, there is a readjustment of all her preaching forces. Once in every twelve months, the Bishop makes out *his appointments*, and shifts the ministers from one field of labor to another.

Every appointment must be made with a thorough knowledge of the qualifications of the preacher appointed, and the demands of the work to which he is appointed. This knowledge can only be had through the Presiding Elder, and to him the Bishop looks for "*Recommendations.*" He is the eyes



and *ears* of the Bishop, and the mouth-piece of the people.

Having been in constant touch with both preachers and people, and having acquainted himself thoroughly with the conditions, wants and requirements of the churches, as well as the peculiar talents and adaptations of the preachers, he is admirably well, prepared to council the Bishop in the matter of appointments. In fact without the office of the Presiding Eldership, our present efficient Itinerant system could not be maintained. The vastness of the field, together with the multiplicity of general interest to be looked after, renders it a physical impossibility for the Bishop to acquaint himself with the wants, needs and conditions of the people, as well as the abilities and peculiar adaptations of the preachers—knowledge, absolutely essential to a judicious disposition of the ministerial forces under him. Hence, the advice of the Presiding Elder is *absolutely* essential to the Bishop in making out his annual appointments, and in making operative the Itinerancy, the soldiery of our Methodism.

Through the Presiding Elder a constant and thorough oversight is kept over all the work. As a part of the executive machinery of the Church, his first official duty is to "travel at large in his district." He is the "assistant" of the Bishop, appointed to "oversee the spiritual and temporal business of the societies in his district," in the absence of the Bishop. Hence, four times a year, he visits each point in his district, convenes the Quarterly Conference and examines into the spiritual and temporal condition of the work. A minute inquiry is made in reference to every department of the Church, and every element of church efficiency. Inquiries are made in reference to the government of the Church during the Quarter; as to local Preachers, Exhorters, and their efficiency; as to increase or decrease in membership; as to baptisms, the condition of the Sunday school; the support of the pastor; and the finances of the Trustee as they effect current expenses, or property interest; as to the general claims of the Church, and benevolent enterprises; also as to the circulation of the Church periodicals among the people.

The information gained from these several inquiries are all supplemented by carefully written statements from the respective boards and departments of the Church, from which the Presiding Elder is enabled to gain a fair knowledge of the spiritual and temporal condition of the Society, or Societies under his immediate charge. In addition to this, the moral, religious and official character of the official members are examined; the wayward and the rebellious re-proved or dismissed, the slothful urged to duty, and the faithful ones encouraged.

Also, all judicial matters, whether presented by appellant members or by the officary of the Church, are settled by the Presiding Elder, and the Quarterly Conference at these stated quarterly visits. And thus the peace and equilibrium of the Church, which might be threatened by maladministration, maintained. This Sub-episcopal supervision—this quarterly inspection of every society in the district is a great benefit both to the local church and also to the executive head.

As on the one hand, it stimulates and arouses the Church to action, puts things in

order and inspires the whole church community to greater Christian endeavors; while on the other hand, it acquaints the Presiding Elder with the affairs of the Church so thoroughly, as well as the peculiar fitness of the preacher, as to enable him to make a correct report and recommendation, touching any point in his district, when called into Episcopal council. Thus through the Presiding Elder system, the Bishop is kept in touch with all of the work, and the Episcopacy or General Superintendency maintained.

In fine, with Mr. Stevens, we would say, "We have no hesitancy in saying that no function of the system—not excepting the Episcopacy itself—is capable of greater usefulness, or could be sacrificed with less peril. The Episcopacy could not possibly proceed without it; but the Presiding Eldership might possibly operate the system without the Episcopacy, though with clumsy inefficiency—the Episcopacy exerts great and salutary influence through the Church by its Itinerant preaching and counsels; but the influence of the Presiding Eldership is on a scale more effective, because more systematic." (Church Polity, p. 186.)

## CHAPTER XI.

### THE ONLY TRUE SUCCESSION.

From a faithful and thorough study of the sacred Scriptures, and especially the prelatie texts, upon which Romanist base the primacy of Peter; as well as the history of the pontificate, with its false claims of sacerdotal power, it seems explicitly clear that there is not now, nor ever has been such a thing in the Christian ministry as Apostolic Succession.

But there is a succession in the Christian Ministry, nevertheless—a true succession—a succession, which rests not upon the transmission of some mysterious virtue, grace and authority from Peter, but from Christ himself, and those who are its possessors, are all such as receive the *Divine Call*.

A Divine Call from on  
DIVINE CALL. high is the first fundamental prerequisite to the Gospel minister. From the earliest period in the history of the human race,  
(168)



as found in the Bible, God has himself made choice of those who should minister at his altar, and preach the Gospel of his grace to the world.

This is first seen in the lives of Abel, Noah, Melchisedec, and Abraham. But the history of God's plan to choose and call those who were to administer unto him, begins more explicitly with the departure of the children of Israel from Egypt.

On the eve of their departure, God chose the first male born of every family to minister before him these, were to be his priests. Witness his word to Moses, "And the Lord spake unto Moses, saying, Sanctify unto me all the firstborn, whatsoever openeth the womb among the children of Israel, both of man and of beast: it is mine." (Ex. 13:1, 2.) This plan of choosing the firstborn to the service of God obtained in Israel until they were settled in the land of Canaan, when he then made choice of a certain tribe—that of Levi—to perform the service of his house, "And I, behold, I have taken the Levites from among the children of Israel instead of all the firstborn that openeth the matrix among the children of Israel: Therefore the



Levites shall be mine; Because all the firstborn are mine." (Num. 3: 12, 13.) Following this, viz.: that of a certain family of this tribe—that of Aaron—to perform the duties of the priesthood, witness, Ex. 28: 1. "And take thou unto thee Aaron thy brother, and his sons with him, from among the children of Israel, that he may minister unto me in the priest's office, even Aaron, Nadab and Abihu, Eleazar and Ithamar, Aaron's sons." But for some reason, He still retained his claim on the firstborn, requiring the parents to buy off this obligation by making a certain offering to him soon after the birth of their firstborn, which offering was to go to the maintenance of the priest he had chosen in their stead. Witness, (Num. 3: 50, 51.) "Of the firstborn of the children of Israel took he the money; a thousand three hundred and three score and five shekels, after the shekel of the sanctuary: And Moses gave the money of them that were redeemed unto Aaron and to his sons, according to the word of the Lord, as the Lord commanded Moses." But even in this plan we see, as in the former, that God did not surrender his right to choose those

who should preach his Gospel. Thus throughout the Jewish economy, God chose his own priesthood. Not only have we the history of this fact in the Old Testament that God *chose* Aaron, but in the New Testament we are told, "No man taketh this honour unto himself, but he that is *called* of God, as was Aaron." (Heb. 5: 4.) Every intimation in the New Testament, with reference to the call and appointment to the ministry, is to the effect that Christ holds sole control of the whole matter.

They are His ambassadors, and he alone has the right to select them. Henkle in "Analysis of Principles of Church Government" says, "an Ambassador can not create an Ambassador, this being the work of the supreme power. He may judge of qualifications, acknowledge claims to genuineness, and endorse them to others; but the authority to be really valid must come from him alone, whether king or president, who may enjoy the supreme authority."

Thus Christ instituted the ministry and decreed its perpetuity in a succession of faithful men of Apostolic zeal and purity; but while he left to them the manage-

ment of such as respect economic details, he held distinctly in his own hands this great matter of succession, by reserving the sole power of creating his own ambassadors to the end of the line. God has not made himself dependent upon erring mortals for a valid succession of his ministers of grace, but from Abel to Aaron; from Aaron to Paul; and from Paul to the last anointed of grace to preach, he has reserved the sole and exclusive right to himself, to call and send those who are to administer before him in holy things.

Thus it is clear that no priestly pretensions; no so-called transmissions of ministerial orders; no feigned bestowment of plenary power by Pontifical hands, can in any sense make a true minister of Christ.

Something more than human authority—something without which all human authority, gifts and graces are nothing—must be had before one can be said to be a God-called and God-sent minister. He who stands in Christ's stead must be "An Apostle, not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father." (Gal. 1:1.)

**THE INDICIA OF HOLINESS,  
THE BADGE OF TRUE  
SUCCESSION.**

The successors of the apostles are such as bear the indicia of holiness. Christianity is pre-eminently a holy religion, and God has ordained, that those who administer before him must be holy. On the institution of the priesthood, God ordained that they should be sanctified.

A holy priesthood. "They shall be holy unto their God, and not profane the name of their God: for the offerings of the Lord made by fire, and the bread of their God, they do offer: therefore they shall be holy." (Lev. 21:6.) Nearly a thousand years later mindful of the divine declaration that the sons of Levi must be holy, Isaiah on the return of Israel from bondage, in an admonition poetically sublime, sang "Be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the Lord." (Isa. 52:11.)

And Paul in putting forth the qualifications of a Gospel minister said, "For a bishop (Elder) must be blameless." (Tit. 1:7.) The signet on the forefront of the priest's Mite bearing the inscription, "Holiness unto the Lord," was not a human device, but a

divine requirement. It was required of God to be worn by the priest as an indicative of his holy life and of his high and holy calling. Holiness of life was the standard God set up in the beginning for his anointed, and that standard he has maintained through all the sweep of ages.

And yet there are those who have the audacity to affirm that the valid exercise of ministerial functions are only to be found with those who wear the livery of Rome. What presumption! How preposterous!! God's ministers are called, and sanctified, and only such are true successors of the apostles. No amount of ecclesiastical pretension or theological jugglery, can in any sense prepare a man to preach the Gospel whose heart has not been cleansed from all iniquity, and whose life has not been sanctified to his service. In the language of Bishop Gaines, "There are cords in the harp of religion he can never strike unless his hand has felt the bleeding wounds of the crucified; there are notes in the song of the Lamb he can never sing unless his lips have been touched with the live coal from the altar of redeeming love." (*Call to the Ministry*, p. 23.)



**APOSTOLIC DOCTRINE AND  
EVANGELICAL PREACHING.**

Those who have succeeded the apostles in the ministry are those who have continued steadfast in the apostles' doctrine, and preached an evangelical Gospel. The preaching of the truth, the faith and doctrine as taught by the apostles is and ever has been an unerring standard by which the truly God-called and God-sent minister may be judged. Who are those who have kept the fires burning on the Gospel altar? Who are those who have preached a living conscience-awakening sin-conquering soul-saving Gospel? Have they been Romanists? Were they Successionists? Verily, no! They were those who went everywhere preaching the Gospel for the first four or five hundred years after Christ's ascension, before the doctrine of Apostolic Succession crept into the Church. After them came the Waldenses in the valleys of the Alps; the Albigenses; the Lollards in England; Luther, Melancthon, Calvin, Zuingle, Huss, John Knox, John and Charles Wesley, Whitfield, Asbury, Coke, Allen, Wm. Paul Quinn, and a mighty army of evangelical colaborers of whom the world



was not worthy. To quote again from Mr. Powell: "Whenever Gospel truth has been preserved against error, and a *Real Revival* of Apostolic faith and gospel holiness has been brought about, God has employed men not in this scheme of succession. The Gospel would have perished if left to this succession, man corrupts everything. He is not to be trusted with so precious a treasure as Christianity. God keeps his own work in his own hands. *He and he alone holds the keys to the ministry of his word.* When a regular ministry is scriptural and pious, God greatly blesses it. It is an unspeakable blessing to the Church. But when ministers forsake God, God forsakes them. He then raises up others; he sets his own seal to their piety, doctrine, labors, and sufferings, by making them abundantly successful in the conversion of sinners and in the edification and extension of His Church.

The residue of the spirit is with him. The hearts of all men are in his keeping; He can raise up and qualify instruments for his work from any quarter. The fishermen of Galilee—the poor men of Lyons—the Huguenots in France—the Lollards in England

—Luther the monk in Germany—the Wesleys at Oxford—these have been God's instruments! Well! Let all human schemes perish in their turn when wrongly used to prevent the progress of the Gospel truth and holiness! The Lord liveth! blessed be his holy name! Blessed be his name for his servants, for his martyrs, his confessors, his holy ministers of every name; above all, blessed be his name, for the unspeakable gift of his holy *truth* transmitted by the *sacred Scriptures*, and a holy ministry from generation to generation! May it more than ever prevail! And may the earth be filled with his glory! Amen! Amen! (Apostolic Succession, p. 285.)

THE OFFICE MUST BE  
MAGNIFIED.

In conclusion to the sons of Levi, who minister at our holy altars—divinely called to preach his word,—properly qualified, duly constituted, and regularly appointed; preaching the doctrines the apostles preached, filled with their zeal, and emulating their virtues, our's is a glorious unimpeachable, imperishable, unbroken, evangelical, and therefore Apostolical Succession of truth and grace, through the royal line of

Payne, Waymen, Campbell, Quinn, Allen, Simpson, McKendree, Asbury, Coke, Whitfield, and the Wesleys, the Reformers and Church Fathers, Paul and Peter, James and John, on and on, back and up to our own Eternal Melchisedec, "Having neither beginning of days nor end of life."

As we close these lines, the spirit of the fathers rests upon us. Our soul is on fire. The spirit has lifted us from the low plains of dull prose to the mountain heights of poetry, with Doddridge we stand, and with him we sing:

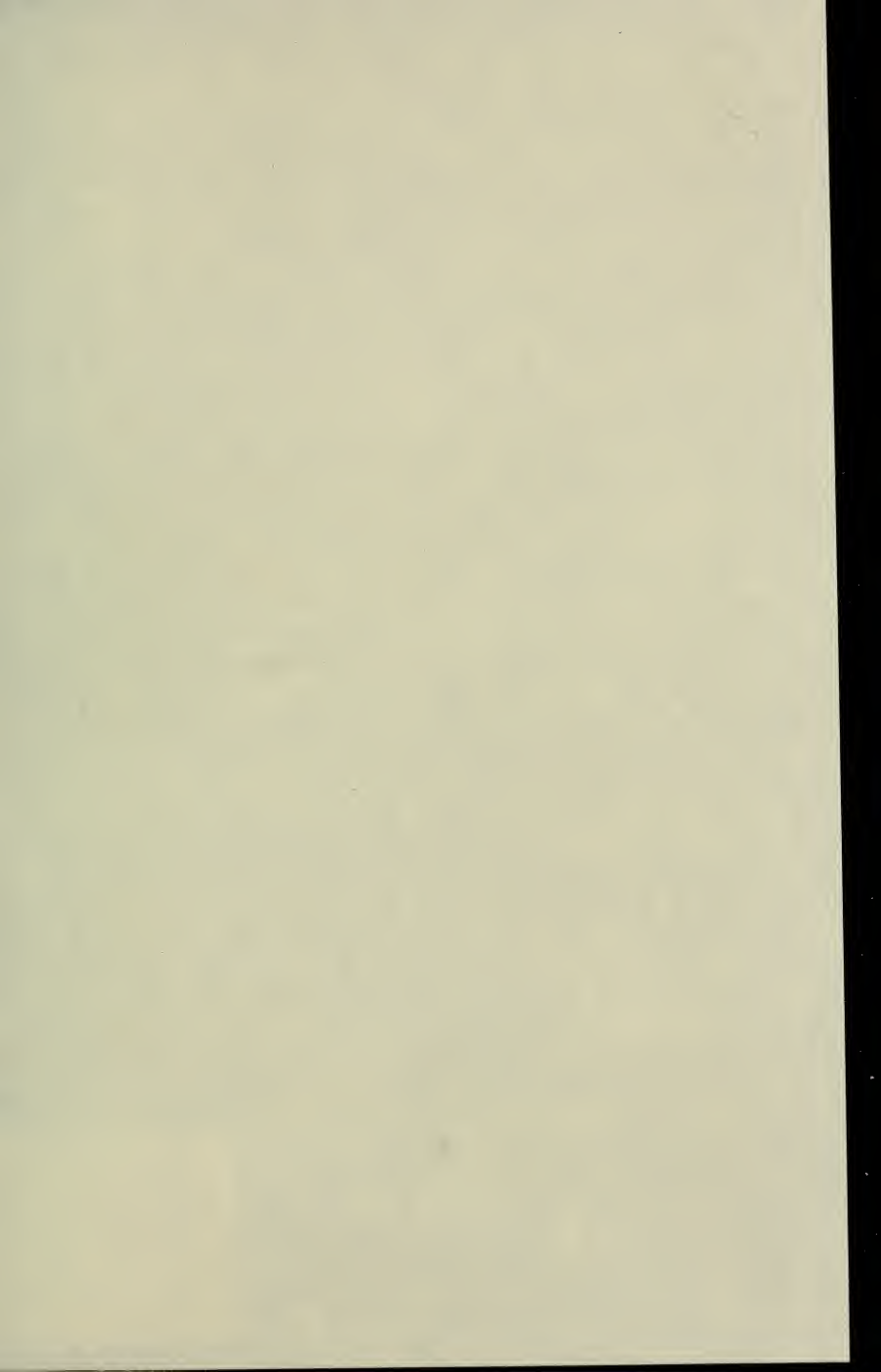
"The Savior, when to heaven he rose,  
In splendid triumph o'er his foes,  
Scattered his gifts on men below;  
And still his royal bounties flow.  
Hence sprang the apostles' honored name,  
Sacred beyond heroic fame;  
In humbler forms, before our eyes,  
Pastors and teachers hence arise.  
From Christ they all their gifts derive,  
And, fed by Christ, their graces live;  
While guarded by his Mighty hand,  
'Midst all the rage of hell they stand.  
So shall the bright succession run  
Through all the courses of the sun:  
While unborn Churches, by their care,  
Shall rise and flourish, large and fair."

*The* **END.**

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